MARJORY'S DISCOVERY

Alice E. Allen

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MARJORY'S DISCOVERY

THE
MARJORY-JOE SERIES

BY

ALICE E. ALLEN

Each, library 12mo, illustrated, $1.50

Joe, the Circus Boy—Rosemary

The Martie Twins, *Continuing the Adventures of Joe, the Circus Boy*

Marjory, the Circus Girl

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Marjory's House Party

Marjory's Discovery

L. C. PAGE & COMPANY (INC.)

53 Beacon Street Boston, Mass.

"SHE HELD A SMALL PAPER PACKAGE HIGH OVER HER HEAD." *(See page 272.)*

The Marjory-Joe Series

MARJORY'S DISCOVERY

HOW THE ROSEMARY TWINS GUARDED THE PEARL NECKLACES

BY

ALICE E. ALLEN

Author of

"Marjory, the Circus Girl," "Marjory's House Party," "Joe, the Circus Boy—Rosemary," "The Martie Twins," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY

ELIZABETH R. WITHINGTON

L. C. PAGE & COMPANY

(INCORPORATED)

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Marjory's Discovery

CHAPTER I

THE WRECK

"WHAT makes you stare at me so, Mary?" Rose Dawson bounced about uncomfortably in her red plush chair and stared back at her Twin across the aisle of the car.

Mary's round, blue eyes remained fixed upon her Twin. Each instant they seemed to grow rounder and bluer.

"I can't help it, Rose," she said, slowly.

"Why?" cried Rose, impatiently.

"I'm trying to make out why people can't tell us apart," explained Mary. "I can't believe I always look like you."

"But why can't you believe it, Mary?"

"Because so many times I don't feel the same inside," said Mary, soberly.

"Well, it doesn't show up outside," said Rose.

"When we got on the train," went on Mary, "I heard some one say, 'Just *see* those Twins—don't they look ex-act-ly alike?' And we weren't feeling a bit alike, Rosie."

"Why weren't we?" asked Rose.

"I was so glad Aunt Rose had suddenly decided to send us on home ahead of her to surprise father—"

"I'm just as glad as you are about seeing father," interrupted Rose, eagerly. "But I didn't want to go home on the train. I wanted to just sweep through Sugar River village, and arrive home in Aunt Rose's car, Mary. Besides, I sort of wanted to

make those visits in the city with Aunt Rose."

"I don't like making visits like that," said Mary, decidedly. "And there you are, Rose. If we don't feel alike, why do we go on looking alike?"

"People aren't looking at our feelings, Mary," said Rose. "They look at our eyes and noses and mouths and hair. You know, yourself, that our outsides are ex-act-ly alike, as that woman said. Why, if you sat back of us, you couldn't tell which of us was which, could you?"

"It seems as if I could," said Mary, thoughtfully. "Where your hair is coming out over the bow a little, it fluffs more than mine does."

"Nonsense, Mary," cried Rose, exasperated. "You do get such queer notions. If a strand of your hair was braided with a

strand of mine, you couldn't tell which was yours, yourself."

"I could," said Mary, "if you braided it, Rose." A slow dimple came into one of her cheeks. Slow twinkles brightened both eyes. "You'd pull it so."

Rose laughed softly. Two dimples came —one for each cheek. A whole crowd of twinkles danced into her eyes.

"There," cried Mary, delightedly, leaning forward. "I never twinkle and sparkle the way you do."

"You're twinkling this minute, Mary Contrary," cried Rose. "Only you can't see yourself doing it. I wonder," she added, "if Billy Brown can tell us apart now. Didn't we have fun that year we went to school as Rosemary Dawson? You a week and I a week, and nobody knowing there were two of us."

Mary nodded her blonde head with its black bow which was so exactly like her Twin's blonde head with its black bow. Then she reached for her knitting. Under Aunt Rose's directions, she was making the first of blue, slip-on, twin sweaters. Rose leaned across the aisle.

"Do see that girl, Mary," she whispered. "The one just getting up—in the tan coat. Isn't she pretty?"

Mary peered around the fat woman who sat ahead of her to get a better view of the pretty girl. Her chair was some distance down the aisle on Rose's side. She was speaking to a maid who sat across from her. The maid picked up a pretty traveling bag and an umbrella. Then they both went slowly down the aisle toward the dining car which was just ahead.

"Isn't she pretty?" said Rose again.

"Her back is," laughed Mary. "Oh dear, Rose, there goes my ball."

Away went the ball of dull-blue wool, across the aisle, under some one's chair, on under some one else's, bobbing out into the aisle again, and then disappearing entirely. Rose and Mary both bobbed along after it, the fat woman and others near by good-naturedly trying to help in the chase. It was Rose who found it, not far from the pretty girl's empty chair. It lay, quietly enough now, against the side of the coach. Beside it lay a quaint bead bag. Rose handed the ball to Mary and picked up the bag.

It was a most delightful bag made entirely of the tiniest beads in soft warm colors. A big blue lily nodded at a big red rose, and across the bottom, against a background of dull red, a pretty church of blue

lifted a black steeple between two green trees.

Mary bent over Rose's shoulder to admire the fascinating bag.

"It's slipped from some one's lap," said Rose. She scanned the people about her, wondering who had lost the pretty thing.

"What a lovely goldy top," said Mary. "And there are some initials on it, aren't there? It's so dark down here, I can't make them out. And this car sways so. Why—Rose, what—is the matter?"

For Rose, trying to stand erect, was clutching at the side of a chair. And all up and down the long coach, people were throwing down books, magazines, papers, lunch boxes, whatever they had in their hands, to gaze in startled fashion at each other, and out of the nearest window. The next instant, there came a sudden awful

crashing of brakes, a roar of steam escaping somewhere, and a dizzying rocking from side to side.

A long time afterward, Rose became conscious of several things, one after another. There was a pain in her head, and another in her back. For a long time it seemed that the two pains were twins and couldn't be told apart. Then there was a troublesome streak of something bright and hot that kept trying to get in her eyes, if she opened them even the least bit. She could hear something that sounded sweet and cool and comforting like the trickle of water. But with it was another sound that wasn't comforting—like some one crying. Was she crying? She opened her eyes. The troublesome bright hot something seemed to be sunshine. Where was she? And who was she anyway?

"Am I Mary—or Rose?" she said, or thought she said, after a long, dazed minute.

Something came quickly between her and the sunshine. At first from clouds of unconsciousness and pain, she thought she was looking into her own face, wet with tears, and whiter than she had ever seen it, except for a jagged red streak across its forehead. She shut her eyes. Later, something wet and cool touched her hot forehead. She opened her eyes again.

"Rose," said a voice. It sounded exactly like her own, only it was weak and trembling. "Are you dead?"

"I don't know," said Rose. Or she thought she said it.

"Can't you say just a word to me, Rosie?" said the voice again. There was a sob and tears splashed on her face.

"Are you Rose?" Rose thought she said. But all she really said was, "Rose?"

"You're Rose," said the anxious, little voice. "I'm Mary."

"You look like Rose," said Rose. This time she really said what she thought she did.

"Why, of course," said the voice. "Mary always looks like Rose, you know. Do you feel better, Rosie? Do please, if you can. It's going to be dark soon—and we're all alone here."

"Am I Rose—really?" asked Rose. "I —don't feel—like Rose."

"You're Rose," said Mary gently. "And I'm Mary. Don't you remember?"

"The Rosemary Twins?" said Rose, trying to smile.

"Could you sit up, Rosie," asked Mary, anxiously, "if I helped?"

With Mary's help, Rose sat up leaning against a tree.

"Where are we?" she asked, staring about.

"Somewhere under a hill," said Mary.

This meant nothing to Rose, except

There was an old woman lived under a hill,
And if she's not dead, she lives there still.

She started to say this, but Mary looked so frightened, she stopped.

"How did we get—under a hill?" she said, after shutting her eyes tight and trying to get her tangled-up thoughts into shape. "Is this where we started for?"

"We started for home," said Mary. "Aunt Rose put us on the train—don't you remember, Rosie? Then, there was an awful wreck." Mary shuddered.

Suddenly it all came back to Rose. She sat up straight and clutched Mary.

"The train rocked," she cried, "and I clutched for you. And you weren't there —and something hit my head—and I ran. Then I fell down and got up and ran and ran and fell down again, Mary."

Mary nodded.

"I crawled out of a window," she said, "all by myself. It took a long time. Then I went up and down looking for you. But you weren't anywhere. And every one was so busy looking for some one, no one paid any attention to me. And some people were hurt, Rose. It was dreadful. By and by, I found a little path that went away by itself. I followed it down into this gulf. And right here, in these pine needles and moss, I found you."

Every bit of Mary's pretty color was

gone. Her eyes were frightened and black —not blue at all—under the ugly cut in her forehead. There was a great smudge of soot on her nose which added to her strange appearance.

"Never mind," said Rose. "We're both here now—and we aren't hurt."

"Can you get up, Rose?" asked Mary, anxiously.

Taking hold of the friendly little tree, Rose slowly pulled herself up. She was giddy at first and had to lean against its sturdy trunk. But things soon straightened out. She smiled at her Twin.

"See," she said.

"Could you climb up the side of the gulley?" asked Mary.

"Maybe I could follow the path back," said Rose, doubtfully.

"I wouldn't go back by that path," said

Mary, with a little shiver, "for anything, Rosie. It goes straight back to the wreck. And I never want to see a railroad again. But maybe we could find a house up on the top of that hill somewhere."

"What time is it?" said Rose. She sat down again beside Mary and leaned her head against the tree.

"My wrist watch smashed all to bits," said Mary. "See where it cut my wrist?"

"Mine's going," said Rose.

The cheery voice of Rose's little watch was a good thing to hear; but it was ticking the minutes briskly away. It was after eight o'clock. The round red sun had gone down. All about them were the long, purple shadows of night. A sleepy robin was chirping somewhere above them.

"Why not stay here till morning, Mary?" said Rose. "I'm so tired. And my head aches dreadfully yet. Do let's."

Mary looked all about her. It was a pretty little spot into which the runaway path had brought her. It had come through a little patch of woods bringing a stream with it to join a bigger stream here in the gulf. The little hollow in which she had found her Twin was as comfy and snug as if it had been made just to hold two frightened, train-wrecked little girls. At one side of it stood the staunch, little pine tree, whose needles helped to make the ground soft. At the other side was a wild apple tree in full bloom. The apple tree put out a friendly branch; the pine put out a friendly branch. Just over the little girls' heads, the two branches met, like clasping hands. Pink apple blooms min-

gled prettily with the glossy pine needles.

"All right," she said, slowly. "It won't be long till morning, if we go right to sleep. But I'm not sleepy a bit."

"You can knit when the moon gets up higher, Mary," said Rose, with a faint little giggle. "You've hung on to your knitting bag, I see."

Mary stared at the big blue-flowered thing on her arm. "It's been there all this time," she said, "and I never even saw it till now."

"I wish it was a lunch box," said Rose. "My stomach feels so queer, Mary—maybe it's empty."

"There's a lunch in it," cried Mary, excitedly diving down into the bag. "Four sandwiches and two oranges. Don't you remember at the last minute, Aunt Rose put them in? What will Aunt Rose think

has become of us, Rose?" she added, solemnly.

"I don't know," said Rose. "But we can't do anything about it to-night, Mary."

Side by side, in the pine needles, the wrecked Twins ate their late supper. After it, they felt better.

Mary put two sandwiches away carefully for breakfast. Then she curled down in the warm, little hollow beside her Twin. Overhead, the trees joined protecting hands. And slowly, the gulf was growing light from a great, yellow moon.

"There's something in these needles somewhere," said Rose, fidgeting about, "that hurts me. I thought it was part of the pain in my back, but it isn't."

Mary burrowed about under Rose. She found something that was not a stone, but that in some way felt strangely out of place.

She brought it out and held it up before her own and Rose's surprised eyes. It was a small bead bag. Its colors caught the light of the coming moon. Its golden chain gleamed softly.

"It belonged to some one in the train," said Mary. "We'd just found it when the crash came."

"I couldn't have clutched it all the time I was running and falling down, could I, Mary?" asked Rose. She gazed solemnly at the little bag. Then she gazed solemnly at Mary.

"Why yes," said Mary, "you could, Rose, because you did. But we won't ever know now whose it is, will we?"

CHAPTER II

THE RESCUE PARTY

THE sun gets up early in May. It really was not long before dawn was unrolling her rosy ribbons down the sides of the gulf in place of the moon's silvery ones. But the Twins, in their bed of pine needles, slept on and on.

When at last they did awake, it was at the same moment, as usual. Mary blinked at Rose. Rose blinked at Mary. Mary pulled herself up on one arm to get a better view. Rose did the same. Then both said "Ouch!" for Rose's head hurt in back and Mary's hurt in front. And muscles they had never known they had cried out

sharply against being moved at all.

Mary pushed the hair out of her eyes and stared at her Twin. Rose did not look like Rose. She had lost her black hair bow. Her hair was loose at the neck and very untidy, with bits of pine needles and moss clinging to it. Her middy-blouse was torn straight down the front. Her face smudged with soot looked white and strange.

Meanwhile, Rose stared at Mary. Mary did not look like Mary. Her black hair bow still clung rakishly to a strand or two of hair. But a lock had broken loose and hung over her eyes. And it was full of broken pine needles. A sleeve of her middy was torn almost out. The cut across her forehead showed long and red. And where her face was not black with soot, it was very white indeed.

"Can you get up, Rose?" Mary asked. At the same minute Rose said, anxiously, "Can you get up, Mary?"

Both Twins could get up, stand up, and walk. But walking hurt Rose so much, that she sat down quickly again.

"It hurts my back," she said.

Mary gazed anxiously at Rose's dirty face.

"I'm going to wet this clean handkerchief," she said, "and wash your face. Then maybe you'll feel better."

Mary made several trips to the stream before Rose's face was clean. Then she washed her own. Each Twin breakfasted on a sandwich. Then Rose lay down again.

"It's my back or my head, I don't know which," she said fretfully, shutting her eyes. "Let's just lie here till some one

comes along and finds us," she added, opening them again after a minute.

"Nobody'll come," said Mary. "I'm going to try to get up the side of the gulf, Rose. There must be a house up there somewhere."

"Oh, I can't, Mary," said Rose.

"You stay right here, Rosie."

"Oh dear," said Rose. "How you'll ever manage without me, Mary Dawson, I don't know."

Mary wondered, herself. Rose was always the one who planned things and went ahead with them.

"I'll be back just as soon as I possibly can," she said.

She poked about, here and there, for a few minutes, in the growth of pines on the side of the gulf. She could not find anything like a path. At last, she began pull-

ing herself up from one tree to another. It was almost straight up and down. By and by, the trees were farther apart, and the rocks became sand. Then, all at once, she found herself in the midst of low briery bushes that caught at and tore her skirt. Sometimes, a ledge of rock jutted out of the sand, and gave her a most unfriendly knock. It was slow, hard work. It seemed to Mary that she slipped back faster than she went ahead. If it had not been for Rose back there in the gulf, Mary must have given up. But thinking of her Twin, she pulled herself painfully along from ledge to ledge, scraping her arms and shins, gaining a little, losing a little, gaining more, losing less. At last, pausing for breath on a broader ledge, she found she was halfway up. She kept on, digging in her heels, clutching at blueberry bushes, step by step,

tug by tug, until she was surely three quarters of the way up. Then, with a final effort which made her poor head throb dreadfully, she brought herself to a ledge not far from the edge of the gulf. A fringe of blueberries grew along the edge. Mary could not quite reach them.

"Maybe if I get my breath," she thought, sitting down to rest for a minute, "and then give a little hop, I can get hold of one of them." She gazed about for a friendly bush that might reach over a bit farther than the others. Then, quite suddenly, out of the tangle of green, a round, freckled, little face peered down at her, and a shrill excited little voice exclaimed:

"I heard you coming. Only I didn't s'pose 'twas a little girl. Who are you? And what made you come?"

"Oh, help me up, please," begged Mary. "Then I'll tell you all about it."

The little face disappeared as suddenly as it had come. But the voice shrilled to some one Mary couldn't see.

"Pet—come here—quick!"

Next minute, the little girl-face again peered over the ledge. A tuft of black hair showed above the face. And above the tuft, another face showed—a little-boy face, round, rosy, solemn, with big, wonderful, black-lashed blue eyes.

Two voices called now.

"Bobby—Bert," they cried, "do come here quick."

Next minute, Mary waiting hopefully on her ledge, saw two more boy-faces, older than the first, looking anxiously down at her. And in spite of the fact that Mary had never liked boys, these faces looked

good. Four pairs of arms reached down to help her up. And digging in her toes, and clasping fast to those stout, friendly, little hands, Mary went over the edge of the ledge and sat down, breathless, in the very middle of a blueberry bush. Four little folks stared at her. The little girl brushed at her skirt.

"Did you fall over?" asked one of the older boys.

"She climbed up," said the little girl.

"She couldn't—not there," said the boy.

"I did," said Mary. "Where am I, anyway?"

"That's the Penny Bank," said the boy, who did the talking. He pointed out a big, rambling, old house perched on the hillside. "I'm Bob Penny."

"That's where we live," said the second boy. "I'm Bert Penny."

"ALL FOUR LITTLE PENNIES CAME A STEP NEARER TO GET A BETTER LOOK AT MARY."

"I'm Pet," said the little boy, "and she's Trixy."

"We're the four little Pennies," said Trixy. "Everybody knows us. Who are you? Your face is dirty."

"Yes," said Mary, "I suppose it is. I'm Mary Dawson," she went on. "My Twin sister and I were on the train—"

"Gee," cried Bob. All four little Pennies came a step nearer to get a better look at Mary in her blueberry bush. "Were you in that wreck, yesterday?"

Mary grew very white.

"It was awful," she said. "I can't bear to think about it. Rose and I slept down in that gulf last night." Mary sprang up. "Oh, I mustn't stop to talk," she cried. "Isn't there some one who can go back down with me and help her up here?"

"There's nobody home but us," said Bob Penny. "Aunt Melissa's gone to Overbrook for a little walk. That's the big house up there—you can see it through the trees."

Mary stared at the roof of a big house farther up the hill.

"Is there some one there who would go?" she asked.

"It isn't open," said Bob. "There isn't any one there. Bert and I can run to the village and get some one," he added. "'Twon't take so very long."

"Oh, it will seem ages to poor Rose," cried Mary.

"Couldn't Bert and I carry her?" said Bob, thoughtfully. "Is she very big? Is she much hurt?"

"Oh, I don't know, I don't know," cried Mary. "Anyway, she can't walk much.

She's just exactly as big as I am," she added. "Could you carry me?"

"Try and see," said Bob promptly. He and Bert quickly made a chair of their four hands. They offered it to Mary. She slipped into it, put her arms around the boys' necks, and was carried easily enough.

"But up that bank?" cried Mary.

"Huh," said Bob. "I guess not. There's a path."

As soon as the path into the gulf was pointed out to Mary, she fairly ran down it. Bob kept close beside her on one side, Bert on the other; Trixy and Pet panted along behind.

It was not long before they came in sight of the little pine tree and the little apple tree guarding the little hollow. Rose was asleep. Her face was half-hidden by her mass of blonde hair. As if she felt their

eyes upon her, she woke quickly and pulled herself up, staring at them with wide, startled, blue eyes.

"Why, she's most exactly like you," cried Trixy.

"Rose," said Mary, eagerly, "here are the four little Pennies from the Penny Bank up on the hill. They're going to carry you up the path—it's real easy."

A plucky, little dimple came out in Rose's cheek as she looked at her rescue party.

"I'm pretty heavy to carry," she said. "Maybe I can walk if it isn't far."

"Bert and I can carry you," said Bob, importantly.

So, with Mary and Pet and Trixy all trying to help, Rose got into the chair Bob and Bert made and held low for her. It hurt her some, when she put her arms

around their necks, and she winced a little when they set out.

"Oh please go carefully," begged Mary. She winced every time her Twin did, and sometimes when she did not.

Bob and Bert went slowly and carefully. Pet followed with Mary's flowered bag. Mary and Trixy walked one on each side of Rose to help steady her. Twice, they stopped to rest. But the little path was cool and quiet. It had a delightful way of running from one pretty nook to another, beckoning all the way. The air was fresh and sweet with all the dew-wet things of the woods. It really was not long before they came in sight of the hospitable Penny Bank. At sight of its broad porch and wide-open windows, Rose gave a little sigh of relief.

"It's almost like home, Mary," she cried.

She tried to bounce a little on her chair. Instead she fainted dead away.

Staggering, now, with her weight, the boys got her up the steps and on to the porch where a comfortable old lounge, heaped high with pillows, seemed to wait for her.

Mary, worn out with her long strain and this new anxiety, was almost as white as her Twin. Trixy brought water and Mary spilled it on Rose's face and down her neck. Bob rushed to the telephone and called a doctor from the little village below the hill. Bert started to Overbrook to bring Aunt Melissa. Pet followed, still carrying Mary's blue bag.

In a minute or two, Rose opened her eyes.

"That's the first thing I ever did that you didn't do, Mary," she said, a dimple show-

ing for a brief moment. "Do lie down, you look lots worse than I feel."

"Here's Aunt Meliss' now," cried Trixy. She ran down the steps to hurry Bert and Aunt Melissa. The next minute, they all three came back across the porch.

"Bless your dear, frightened-to-death, little hearts," cried Aunt Melissa. She looked at the dirty, scratched faces and hands, the torn, bedraggled skirts and waists, the dusty stockings and shoes. Then she sat down between them and gathered both Twins right up into her kind, motherly arms. "Aunt Melissa's come, and she'll take care of you. Curl right up there—both of you—while I get you some nice, hot milk. By and by, you shall tell me all about everything."

CHAPTER III

AN AUNT, A NURSE, AND A DOG

AUNT MELISSA had scarcely finished her sentence, when up the steep hill from the village and into the yard of the Penny Bank, puffed a doctor's car. The doctor, stout and fussy like his car, puffed across the porch toward them.

"What's all this?" he demanded. He set down his case, whisked out a thermometer, and thrust it into Mary's unwilling mouth. Then he began to look Rose over. He shook his head, now and then, as if he was discovering dreadful things. Mary watched anxiously. The thermometer wouldn't let her talk.

After what seemed a very long time to Mary, he whisked the thermometer out of her mouth, shook his head over it, cleansed it, and put it under Rose's tongue. Then he began on Mary.

"There's nothing the matter with me," she said. "It was Rose, not me, who was hurt, doctor."

"Yes, yes," said the little doctor. He went right on glaring at her cut forehead, feeling her pulse, gazing at her tongue, and poking her here and there. By and by, he set her down on the old lounge beside her Twin.

"It's a wonder they weren't both killed and done with it," he said to Aunt Melissa, who helped him dress Mary's cut. "But there isn't a bone broken. The thing they must do, Mrs. Penny, is to sleep—all to-day and all to-night. Then to-morrow they

must begin and do it all over again. And eat—they must have plenty of good, nourishing food."

"But if they sleep all the time, when can they eat?" asked Pet, suddenly.

"Hey?" said the doctor, glaring at Pet over his big spectacles. "Eat and sleep, I say," he said all over again to the Twins. "You don't need medicine—not a bit of it."

Mary and Rose did not know much about doctors. They could not remember that they had ever had one before in all their lives. They were not even looking at him. They sat staring straight into each other's eyes—a habit of theirs. Now, suddenly, Mary spoke the thought that was in both heads.

"We can't go to sleep," she said, anxiously turning toward the little doctor, "until—"

"Until what, young lady?" asked the doctor, testily.

Dr. Bradley did not know much about children. He was more interested in cases.

"What will Aunt Rose think has become of us?" said Mary slowly. "And father—if he knows."

"Where is this Aunt Rose?" asked the doctor. "Was she wrecked, too?"

"Oh no," said Mary. "We left her in the car."

"We were going on ahead of her to surprise father," said Rose.

"Begin at the very beginning," said Aunt Melissa, gently. "Let them get everything off their minds," she added to the doctor, who was fuming about the porch, "then they can rest better."

"Well," said Mary, "to begin with, we're Rose and Mary Dawson. I'm Mary.

Most of our friends call us 'The Rosemary Twins.' "

"Never mind frills and roses, now," said the little doctor. "Tell just what's necessary."

"Go on, dear," encouraged Aunt Melissa.

"We live at Sugar River in a farmhouse," said Rose. "Oh dear, that isn't necessary, either. You go on, Mary!"

"We have two aunts," said Mary. "Aunt Mary Craig—who lives in New York. Probably Aunt Rose has sent her word, Rose."

"And Aunt Rose Norris," hurried Rose, because the doctor was tapping the floor impatiently with his foot. "She's father's sister. She lives in California."

"California?" cried the doctor.

"Oh, but she isn't there now," explained Mary. "We've been out there living with

her a year. We've come all the way back in her car."

"And yesterday, she put us on the train to go on home," said Rose, "while she went on in the car to make some visits—"

"Nice way to bring up children," said the doctor, "traveling all over the United States, alone."

"We weren't alone till yesterday," cried Mary, indignantly. "It wasn't a very long trip—we'd been home in no time if we hadn't been wrecked."

"Aunt Rose was coming on soon, too," said Rose. "She's building a new bungalow near our home in Sugar River—"

"Never mind building a house and furnishing it, now," said the doctor. "I say you must rest, not talk all the time. So far as I can make out, this Aunt Rose is the only one who'll worry about you then—

serves her right, letting you go on a train, alone."

"Maybe she's telegraphed father by now," said Mary. She grew so white that the doctor became fussier and crosser than ever.

"And Aunt Mary," said Rose, as white as her Twin.

"There you go again," cried the doctor. "What one of you doesn't think of, the other one does."

"Can't we telegraph father right off?" said Mary. "'Cause we can't get Aunt Rose, anyway."

"Why not?" snapped the doctor.

"Her address was in Mary's pocket-book," said Rose. "And it's lost—and the suit case—and everything—"

"Except my knitting bag," said Mary.

"Is there any reason why I can't tele-

phone Sugar River—and your father?" said the doctor. "Now don't tell me he hasn't a phone. These people who haven't phones—"

"He has," said Mary. "But—"

"But what?" cried the doctor, hopping about. This was no way for patients to rest.

"Oh dear," said Mary, "we've been so far away for so long, I'd forgotten you could phone. Of course, I'll phone father, myself."

"You'll do no such thing," said the doctor. "You'll drink some milk and you'll go to sleep—both of you. That's what you'll do. I'll phone your father, myself."

But it was right here that Bob and Bert who had been trying to get in a word for ever so long, burst into the conversation together.

"Gee," said Bob, with no regard to English whatever, "I'll bet that was her at the station."

"There was a woman and a car—a big one—at the station," said Bert, meanwhile.

"She was telephoning everywhere," went on Bob.

"She said she'd lost some Mary-Rose twins, 'cause I heard her," piped up Trixy.

"Are you the Mary-Rose Twins?" Pet asked solemnly of the train-wrecked Twins.

Every one was too much upset to pay any attention to Pet. And in spite of the doctor, every one talked at once and became very much excited. But it was the little doctor, himself, who called up the station.

"This is the Penny Bank," they heard him say. "Yes. Have there been inquiries for twin girls named Rose and Mary

Dawson, survivors of the wreck, yesterday?"

The Rosemary Twins stared at each other. Were they really survivors of a wreck?

"There have been?" the doctor was saying, meanwhile. "Well, tell her they're here. Yes, here. The Penny Bank. Mr. Peter Penny's home, just above the village. Yes. Send her right along then."

"Stay right where you are till your aunt comes," he cried, bustling back to the porch. "She ought to be here in ten minutes."

Just eight minutes later, by Rose's watch, they heard the loud "Honk" of a heavy-powered touring car. It turned the corner just below the Penny Bank and fairly leaped up the hill. It stopped just outside the yard. A beautiful woman, with blonde

hair under a blue-gray hat, flew up the walk, up the steps and across the porch.

The next minute, she had the Rosemary Twins in her arms. All three sobbed excitedly. Aunt Melissa wiped her eyes. The four little Pennies formed a group about the lounge. The little doctor fussed up and down. "Bless my soul," he said, "there's nothing to cry about now, is there? We're all safe now, aren't we?" And he added something about "sleep" and "milk" which no one but himself heard.

"Heard of the accident last night," Aunt Rose was saying, between sobs and hugs. "Didn't wait—started right along—drove like mad to Brookside. No one knew anything about you, Twinnies. I was wild—didn't phone your father—knew how he'd blame me. Kept waiting—hoping to hear. Phoned up the line and down the line.

Waited all night at the hotel for a word—was sure you must show up somewhere. This morning, called up Aunt Mary. Thought maybe some one had taken you to her. She hadn't heard a word. Was just going to phone your father—when the station-agent said you were here. Where have you been? And how did you get here? Oh, tell me everything quick!"

In spite of the little doctor, every one talked. Mary and Rose told what little they knew of the wreck and what had followed it. Aunt Melissa and the little Pennies added what they could. The doctor helped out, too. The wreck had taken place just below Brookside station. Only a few had been seriously injured, and automobiles had taken them to hospitals.

"Your Rose-Twin, madam," he went on to Aunt Rose, who still held fast to her

Twins, "was hit on the head. She must have run for a long distance and then fallen unconscious. Your Mary-Twin saw more of the wreck than was good for her, had some cuts, a bad nerve-shock, and hunted about till somehow she found her Twin. Don't ask me how, madam. I don't know."

"One of them always finds the other," cried Aunt Rose. "You can't keep my Rosemary Twins apart, doctor."

"Uh-uh," grunted the doctor. "Well, my dear woman, I say they must have food and sleep—and at once—or I won't answer for the results."

"I'll put them right in the car," said Aunt Rose, "and take them straight home."

"Not so fast, not so fast, my dear woman," cried the doctor. "I can't permit them to be moved for some days. A whole week

of sleep won't hurt them. Stay right where you are for a week anyway—then we'll see."

"A week in that hotel, doctor," cried Aunt Rose, "would kill the three of us. I'll take them to a hospital."

"Hotel! Hospital!" cried the doctor. "Stay right here in this Penny Bank—with Aunt Melissa to run it."

"Why, I couldn't think—" began Aunt Rose.

"You can't think of doing anything else," said Aunt Melissa. "The house is big and cool and you're just as welcome. I'll get a woman from the village to help out with the housework. Then I can help take care of the twins, maybe—"

"I've brought a nurse," cried Aunt Rose suddenly. "I forgot all about her—she's in the car. Miss Russell," she called.

A pretty, little person, who looked like a little girl, came quickly up the walk.

"I'm not presentable," she said, as she sat down on the lounge between the Twins. "Your aunt wouldn't give me time, last night, even to change my uniform. But here I am—are these my patients, doctor?"

"They need food and sleep—" began the doctor.

"I'm sending Larry back with the car to get our luggage, Miss Russell," interrupted Aunt Rose. "Do we want anything else?"

"What'll we do about the dog?" asked the nurse, unexpectedly.

"Oh, the dog!" cried Aunt Rose. "Larry found him in our car, this morning. He had hurt his paw—we think he was in the wreck, too. Larry and Miss Russell gave him first aid. He's the friendliest old

chap. Could we keep him here, too, Mrs. Penny, until he gets better?"

"Of course," cried Aunt Melissa. "It won't be the first hurt animal this old house has taken in. My little niece, who's in New York now, used to bring in countless cats and dogs when she was home."

At the first mention of a dog, all four little Pennies had scampered down to the car. And now Larry was coming up the walk, with a big brown and white terrier in his arms.

"It's Fritz, Aunt M'liss," exclaimed Bob. "Or we guess it is."

"Course it's Fritz," said Pet, importantly. He was helping Larry by clutching fast to the dog's tail.

"Never mind the dog," said the little doctor. "Get these children in bed, nurse,

and keep them quiet. There's altogether too much noise and excitement. It's bad for them. I'll be here again to-night," he added, as he went fussily away.

CHAPTER IV

DOCTOR'S ORDERS

BY afternoon, the old Penny Bank had become, inside, as much like a hospital as it possibly could in so short a time. In the big parlor, side by side, stood two little beds brought from upstairs.

In each bed was a Twin. After a hot bath, each had been put into a borrowed nightgown, each had had her blonde hair combed, brushed, braided in two long braids, and fastened with borrowed ribbons. Now that the excitement, strain, and anxiety of being wrecked and rescued was over, they were weak and tired. Rose was

drowsy, and fell asleep almost at once, but Mary was wide-awake and restless.

Aunt Rose was resting upstairs from her long night of anxiety and wakefulness. The dog had been made comfortable, too. He was in a bed in a store room off the kitchen. He had lost his collar in the wreck; but every minute, the little Pennies grew more certain that he was their friend Joel Bernard's wonderful trick-dog, Fritz.

"If he can do all sorts of tricks," Bob explained to Miss Russell, "he's Fritz. But if he can't, he's just a common dog."

The four little Pennies followed the little nurse about, telling her stories of Fritz. He had been a circus dog once, long ago, they said. But now he lived in New York with Joe and his sister, Betty. Joe was in college and Betty was in school, somewhere. And what ever did Miss Russell suppose

Fritz could have been doing in that wreck?

Miss Russell smiled at the four little Pennies. She did not suppose the injured dog was the "Fritz" dog at all. But she did not say so. The dog who had come out of the wreck was a fine fellow. And she meant to take good care of him as well as of her other patients.

After a while she sent the four little Pennies outdoors to play. She tiptoed to the parlor door and peeped in.

Mary smiled at her. Miss Russell smiled back.

"Close your eyes, dear, and go to sleep," she said.

Mary closed her eyes. But she opened them again just as quickly. Whenever Mary shut her eyes, she saw the things she had seen in the wreck. She liked the old-fashioned parlor better. It had a fireplace,

now filled with apple bloom and fern. Aunt Rose had exclaimed with delight over the few pieces of quaint, old furniture. There were some queer, old pictures, too, most of them Bible scenes. Over the mantel hung a large picture of a girl. Mary's eyes came back always to this picture. The girl wore a dark straw hat, turned up across the front, showing her fluffy hair. Her eyes laughed straight across the room at Mary. Mary could not think what she would have done all that long afternoon, while Rose slept, if it had not been for the picture girl. Mary talked to her, and it seemed as if the girl talked, too. By supper time, Mary felt well acquainted with her.

When Miss Russell came in to talk about their suppers, she found a white, weary, wide-eyed Mary and a flushed, drowsy

Rose. One was too tired and the other too sleepy, to want much supper. And when the little doctor came later, he shook his head and scolded Miss Russell. Mary was done up in a bathrobe and put out on the porch lounge, so Rose could sleep some more, if she wanted to.

It was cool and sweet on the porch with a pink sunset light, everywhere. Trixy brought one of her dolls and climbed up beside Mary.

"If Lissy was here, she'd make my doll a new dress," she said.

"Who's Lissy?" asked Mary, listlessly. She had heard the name over and over since she came to the Penny Bank. At this minute, she was wearing Lissy's bathrobe.

"Don't you know Lissy?" cried Trixy. "She's my sister. She's a very nice girl—Lissy is. She lives with John and Doris

and they've got a brand-new baby. Her name's Gerry Dean. She makes 'leven Pennies in all. There's been just a dime of us before."

Trixy chattered on and on. Mary was too tired to listen and too tired to try to stop her.

"Aunt M'liss and father's two," counted Trixy. " 'Nen John and Lissy—that's four. And Doris is five." She illustrated with the fingers of one hand. " 'Nen there's four of us—that's nine, 'cause Bob says so. Bob can count like anything. I can't, 'cause I'm only five yet awhile. 'Nen there's Margie—she's ten." Trixy waved both hands, fingers spread wide. "Now Gerry Dean's come—she's 'leven. But I haven't any fingers to count her on."

Right in the midst of Trixy's chatter, Miss Russell came to help Mary to bed.

To Mary's surprise, they went upstairs into a long, narrow room with sloping walls on two sides and quaint dormer windows.

Mary liked the room. It was sweet with apple blossoms. For a giant apple tree stood so close to one of the windows that some of its blossoms were almost inside.

"Where's Rose?" asked Mary, as she crept between the clover-scented sheets and moved over toward the back of the bed.

"Rose will sleep downstairs to-night," said Miss Russell.

"But we always sleep together," objected Mary.

"Not to-night, dear."

"Rose won't sleep without me," said Mary, positively.

"She said that about you," said the little nurse. "But the doctor says you are better apart."

Mary did not say anything more. But a big, strange ache came into her heart. Was there something terrible the matter with her Twin? It must be a big something that separated Twins who were always together.

"Aunt Rose will sleep downstairs in the little bedroom off the parlor," said Miss Russell, quite as if the separation of Twins was an everyday affair. "And I'll sleep here on this cot."

Mary said nothing. There seemed to be nothing to say.

"Don't look so woebegone, Mary dear," said Miss Russell.

"Wouldn't you look woebegone if half of you was taken away?" asked Mary. Her lips quivered so she couldn't say anything more.

Aunt Melissa came in just then. She

moved about quietly, giving a last touch or two to the room.

"How do you like Lissy's room?" she asked Mary. "That's her photo on the dresser."

Mary tried to feel some interest in the picture of a girl with sweet, serious eyes.

"There's a dime of us Pennies when we're all together," went on Aunt Melissa.

"Isn't there a new baby?" asked Mary, bits of Trixy's chatter coming back to her.

"Miss Geraldine Penny," cried Aunt Melissa. "Bless my soul, if I hadn't overlooked her for a minute. She's two days old. I'll tell you what you can do, dear," she went on, stooping to kiss the pale anxious little face on Lissy's big pillow, "you count the Pennies, over and over, beginning with me and ending with Geraldine. First thing you know it will be morning."

Aunt Melissa looked so big and comforting, Mary wished she was as little as Trixy so she could creep into her arms and sob out her homesickness and worry about her Twin. Maybe, if it hadn't been for the little, white nurse waiting at the foot of the bed, she would have done so, anyway. Maybe not. The Rosemary Twins never told troublesome things to any one except themselves—unless, once in a great while, to Father.

Aunt Melissa went away. Miss Russell went to bed. Mary bravely shut her eyes. She called up the procession of Pennies, big, middle-sized, and little. She found she could not remember all of their names. But she marched them up the hill, up the steps, across the porch, and into the Penny Bank. She wanted them to go through the house and out the back door. But, instead,

they all trooped into the parlor to find Rose.

And Rose's bed was empty! Mary screamed. Miss Russell was at her side in a minute—a cloud of dark hair falling about her bright, dark eyes. She shook up Mary's pillow, put a soft hand on her forehead, and told her to go to sleep.

Mary tried again. This time, the Pennies tried to climb a steep hill. Mary's back did all the aching that eleven backs should have done. By and by, Pet fell over the edge of something with the new baby. Mary screamed. Miss Russell was there again, shaking the pillow, touching her softly, and telling her to go to sleep.

In a few minutes, eleven Pennies climbed on a train that was promptly wrecked. Mary screamed. But this time, Miss Russell did not come. She had gone down-

stairs. And the sun was looking in through the apple blossoms.

Mary reached out for Rose, found she was not there, remembered where she was, and started to get up and run down to find her. But only one foot was out of bed when Miss Russell came in.

"Rose is having her breakfast," she said, before Mary could say anything. "And in two or three twinklings you shall have yours."

Miss Russell brought a little stand to Mary's bedside. On it she set out all the things necessary to wash Mary's face and hands. Mary went through all the tiresome preparations as patiently as she could. She could scarcely wait to see Rose.

"I haven't any dress, except the torn one," she said.

"Put on Lissy's bathrobe again," said Miss Russell. "I'm going to bring your breakfast up here."

"Please let me run down and eat with Rose," begged Mary.

"Rose will be all through by now," said Miss Russell.

It was a good breakfast she brought Mary in a few minutes, "just exactly like Rose's," she told Mary. But Mary did not eat much. She nibbled a roll and sipped some milk.

"That's enough," she said. "I want to go down and see Rose."

"Now, Mary dear, listen," said Miss Russell. She was kind, but firm. "You are to stay up here all day."

"All day?" cried Mary.

"All day," said Miss Russell.

"But I'm not the one who was hurt, Miss

Russell," explained Mary patiently. "It was Rose." She felt sure that, as so often had happened, doctor and nurse had confused her with her Twin.

Miss Russell nodded.

"Well," said Mary, "then is Rose coming up here?"

"You're a sensible little girl, Mary," said Miss Russell. "And you are not going to make things hard for us, I know. You are to stay up here and Rose is to stay down stairs for three days."

"But what for?" asked Mary.

"Doctor's orders," said Miss Russell. "Now don't fret, Mary, three days isn't long."

Without another word, she went downstairs. At the foot of the stairs, she met Aunt Rose. Aunt Rose was white and anxious.

"What did Mary say?" she whispered.

"She doesn't say much," said Miss Russell.

"But I know just how she looks," cried Aunt Rose, "because Rose looks exactly the same."

"Well, three days are only three days," said Miss Russell.

To the Rose-Twin in the parlor and the Mary-Twin upstairs, there probably never was a day quite so long as that one. It turned out to be Monday, too, though how that busy day before could have been Sunday, neither Twin could quite understand. The little doctor visited Rose, fumed and fussed because she was feverish and had not slept well and because all she wanted was to go upstairs where Mary was. Then he visited Mary, fumed and fussed because she was white and listless and did not want

anything except to go downstairs where Rose was.

"Keep them both quiet," he said, as he went away, "ab-so-lute-ly quiet."

The doctor's voice was pitched in a high key. So, not only did Miss Russell hear, but Mary upstairs and Rose downstairs heard his "ab-so-lute-ly quiet." And each one knew that the other was worse.

Late that afternoon, there was a long, sharp ring at the telephone. The telephone was in the living room. Mary's room was just over it, and Rose's room was just across from it. So both Twins could not help hearing most of what Aunt Melissa said, in answer to the voice at the other end of the line. The voice at the other end of the line was in New York and belonged to Lissy Penny.

"Yes," said Aunt Melissa in the half-

hushed voice that is always used when there is sickness in the house. Then another "Yes." And then another much surprised "Yes?"

"Margie in that wreck?" she said. Then after a half minute, "Well, wasn't that fortunate? Not hurt a bit, anywhere? She was coming to see us? Well, well, bless her heart. What did you say? *Who* did you say? Fritz? Wait a minute. Lissy, are you still there? Well, there's a dog here—yes, yes, yes. I don't know as I'd know Fritz. But the boys think it is. We're taking good care of him. He'll be all right. Runs all over now. But listen, Lissy."

In a voice still lower, Aunt Melissa told hurriedly of the other survivors of the wreck in the Penny Bank. "Their Aunt is here with them," she explained, "and a trained

nurse. Well, we can't tell exactly yet about —the doctor says—of course, it may be."

These last disconnected sentences made Mary suddenly bury her face in Lissy Penny's pillow to hide a big sob. Of course all of them had to do with Rose. But Rose, her own face hidden in a pillow, knew that all of them had to do with Mary. And neither of them would eat any supper, even though there were strawberries that Aunt Mary had sent up from New York, especially for them.

In the small hall at the foot of the stairs, one of the supper trays met the other. Miss Russell and Aunt Rose glanced across them at each other. They both went slowly into the kitchen.

It was while every one was at supper in the dining room, that something happened to Mary.

First, she heard the sound of sharp tip-tapping on the stairs. The next minute, the door of her room was pushed open by an inquiring nose. Into the room, still limping a little, came the big dog.

His tail, which was quite unhurt, wagged eagerly. Mary did not care much for dogs. But this one was so friendly, she did not mind when he came to the bed. He had something in his mouth. Whatever it was he put it down with great care, not far from Mary's hand. Mary reached for it. It was the pretty bead bag that had come through the wreck with Rose. She had forgotten all about it. She wondered listlessly where the dog had found it. Down in the little pine hollow, probably. Mary slipped it under her pillow. To-morrow she would ask Miss Russell or Aunt Rose what to do with it.

But Mary had no more than put it under her pillow, when the dog rose suddenly on his hind legs, dug his head under the pillow, and brought it out again. Then, his tail wagging proudly, he gave it to Mary. He sat down beside the bed, saying, as plainly as he could, "Do it again."

Over and over, Mary tried to find a place to put the bag where the dog would not find it. But wherever she hid it, he dragged it out and gave it to her. Each time, he fairly bristled with pride from his cropped ears to his uncropped tail to think he had found it. At any other time, Mary would have marveled at his cleverness. Now, she did not care much about it or anything else. At last, she dragged herself out of bed, went slowly to the wide-open window, climbed up on the sill, and, reaching up, hung the

bag by its gold chain in the blossomy branches of the old apple tree.

Surprised, the dog studied this new hiding place. For some time, he tried to think of some way to reach the bag. Then, giving it up, he jumped up on the bed beside Mary, and curled down beside her. Mary patted his head. He snuggled close up against her, and in a few minutes, they were both sound asleep.

CHAPTER V

"UPSTAIRS, DOWNSTAIRS"

WHEN Mary woke next morning, all thoughts of the bead bag had gone out of her head. And that was a day so brimful of strange happenings, and was followed by so many others almost as full, that it was no wonder she forgot it entirely, until a long time afterward.

In the first place, when Miss Russell brought her breakfast, she said, "Something nice is going to happen, Mary-Twin, so you must eat plenty of breakfast."

The only nice thing that could happen, so far as Mary could think, was getting back her Twin. So she decided, at once,

that Rose was better and that she was going downstairs to see her. Even if she could not stay all day, an hour or two would be worth something. So Mary swallowed her orange juice at one gulp, and ate her cream toast, though she did not like cream toast, anyway.

Aunt Rose came into the room and fussed about, picking things up and putting them down again. She was smiling and excited over something. Mary was sure she was to go downstairs. She waited patiently while she was made ready, her hair braided and her bathrobe slipped over her nightgown.

Downstairs, in Rose's room, the very same things happened. And Rose, her eyes bright, her cheeks red, was sure Mary was better, and that she was going up to make her a visit.

Then, just as Mary should have gone

downstairs or Rose should have gone upstairs something very different happened. The doctor's fussy little car arrived, and he came in more fussy and excited than ever, if possible. Up and down, up and down Rose's room he walked. Finally, he went out on the porch and walked there, his watch in his hand. "Should be here this minute, if he's coming at all," Rose heard him say as he went by her window.

By and by, a big, gray car, driven by a chauffeur in gray uniform, came swiftly up the hill and stopped outside the Penny Bank. A tall, slim man and a stout, handsome woman got out and came up the walk.

The little doctor brought the tall, slim man into Rose's room. They looked funny, side by side, Rose thought. The tall, slim man turned out to be a famous doctor from the city. He asked Rose all sorts of ques-

tions. When she was sure he could not think of another one, he began on Miss Russell. He asked her all he had asked Rose and ever so many more. He thumped Rose here and thumped her there. He rolled her about the bed as if she had been a sack of something. He looked at her steadily, for a minute, as if he were peering straight into her brain. Then he said "Humph!" and walked out.

They went upstairs into Mary's room. Mary would have laughed if she had not felt so worried. For the little doctor had to take three or four steps to every one of the tall doctor's strides. They reached Mary's bedside about the same time. And Mary was thumped, rolled about, and questioned. Miss Russell, who had followed them into the room, was questioned, too. Then the strange doctor gazed long and

fixedly at Mary, said "Humph!" and went out, the little one trotting along beside him.

Out on the porch, the doctors smoked and talked things over. Rose knew from their tones that they had found Mary very bad off. And Mary knew they had found something dreadful was the matter with Rose.

Just then, Aunt Rose, in fresh, blue linen, came into Rose's room, and said, "Guess who's coming!" And before Rose could more than think "Mary!" in came the stout, handsome woman, who had come in the car, and who was Aunt Mary Craig, herself. The very thought that this busy, wealthy member of the family had come all the way from New York to see them and had brought her own doctor, convinced Rose that somebody must be bad off. And as she did not feel badly anywhere, it must

be poor Mary. So she just hid her face in Aunt Mary's arms and cried. Aunt Mary, who had never before seen a tear in her Rose-Twin's eyes, and who could not bear tears anyway, couldn't think of anything to do except to scold poor Aunt Rose. So Aunt Rose shed some tears, too.

Meanwhile, upstairs, Miss Russell said, "Who do you suppose is coming?" And Mary, wondering if it could possibly be Rose, saw, instead, Aunt Mary's ample figure filling the doorway. And if Aunt Mary could give up all her clubs and committees and churches and charities to come 'way up here, why, of course, Rose must be very bad indeed. So, she just threw both arms around Aunt Mary's neck and sobbed. Aunt Mary scolded Aunt Rose some more, and went away shaking her head and looking much worried.

When the car had gone away, taking Aunt Mary and the city doctor, it was dinner time. And again, neither Twin would eat.

"Why can't I eat with Mary?" said Rose, impatiently. "I never could eat alone, Miss Russell. Is it better for Mary—really?"

"The doctor thinks so," said Miss Russell.

Upstairs, Mary was saying, "Is it really better for Rose, Aunt Rose, to be kept away from me?"

Poor Aunt Rose, who had been scolded all the morning about something, was so near tears again that she could only nod her head in answer.

So back to the kitchen, traveled two full dinner trays.

"I'd let them try a meal together—poor

lonesome little dears," said Aunt Melissa.

"So would I," said Aunt Rose. "If you had ever seen my Rosemary Twins before this happened, Mrs. Penny, you would never believe they were the same girls now."

"Let's try the box," said Miss Russell.

The box had come with Aunt Mary Craig and stood in the living room. After dinner, Aunt Rose and Miss Russell opened it. Half its contents went upstairs with Aunt Rose to Mary's room, the other half went with Miss Russell into Rose's room.

First of all, there were twin, pink bath-robes and twin, blue kimonos. There were twin, blue kilted skirts almost like the ones that had been in the wreck. There were twin white middies and twin blue ones. There were twin pink ginghams and twin

blue linens. There were twin hats and twin pairs of oxfords and twin pairs of stockings. In fact, there was a whole, new wardrobe for each little girl in the place of the one that had gone into and never come out of the wreck.

Mary looked on listlessly while Aunt Rose showed them off. And Rose agreed with Miss Russell that an Aunt Mary Craig was every bit as good as a fairy godmother. But she was not enthusiastic.

"If you could ever have seen them and heard them the last time a box came from Mary Craig," said Aunt Rose, when she and Miss Russell compared notes a little later.

Long as it was, that Tuesday was at last coming to its close. Out on the porch, Aunt Melissa tried to keep four little Pennies and a dog reasonably quiet. Miss

Russell went out to sit down for a few minutes. In the little bedroom, off the parlor, Aunt Rose was going to bed. She was quite worn out. In the parlor, where the curtains swayed in the soft wind and the scent of opening lilacs stole in through the wide-open windows, Rose lay still. All she could think of was Mary.

Upstairs, in Lissy Penny's big bed, lay Mary. The curtains stirred gently. The old apple tree tapped the window-pane and sent her its last fragrant messages. But all she could think of was Rose.

At the very same minute, both Twins heard a sound that brought them sitting straight up in bed. It was the sound of a small roadster tearing up the hill. It was not the fussing and fuming of the doctor's car, not the powerful exhaust of Aunt Mary's, nor the steady purr of Aunt Rose's.

It was a queer, noisy, jerky little sound that ended in a shrill grinding of brakes as the car came to a sudden stop outside the Penny Bank. Mary bounded out of bed and ran to the front window.

Outside the yard was an old battered car, and just getting out of it was a tall, blonde man. He strode up the walk.

"Father, oh Father," screamed Mary, from her window. Father looked up, saw her, waved his hand, and came dashing up the steps.

"Where are they?" he cried to the group on the porch. Then waiting for no answer, he sprang across the porch. He found himself in a little square hall, took the stairs ahead of him at a leap or two, turned a corner in the upper hall, and the next minute, he had gathered a sobbing Twin up into his arms. Then they sat

down in the old rocking-chair that had belonged to Lissy Penny's mother.

"Oh Father, Father, Father," cried Mary, clutching him as if she would never let him go again. "Why didn't you come before? And why can't I see Rose?"

"Where is she?" cried Father, in sudden alarm. He knew his Rosemary Twins, as no one else did. And he had supposed that wherever one was, there the other one would be, too.

"Here I am," cried a glad, little voice. And running through the door, a pink kimono and two, long, light braids flying out behind, came Rose. Somehow, she, too, was in Father's lap. The old rocking-chair creaked gleefully. Rose reached out for Mary. Mary reached out for Rose. Father put his arms around them both and let them cry it out together.

There had been only a sob or two from Mary and a sob or two from Rose, when into the room came a strange procession. It was headed by Aunt Rose, trailing blue silk draperies after her. Next came Aunt Melissa, four wondering little Pennies clinging to her, then Miss Russell with a pink bedroom slipper in one hand. Last of all came the dog, a pink hair ribbon in his mouth.

Father stood up, tall and straight, to meet them. The Rosemary Twins, in the old rocker, stopped crying and peered out, one on each side of him.

"What does this mean, Rose?" he asked his sister.

"Rose couldn't walk," said Aunt Rose.

"She ran upstairs," said father.

"They didn't let me try," said Rose. "Besides, Father, what did I want to walk

for, if they wouldn't let me go to Mary?" She gave Mary another hug. "Oh, but it's good to feel you again, Mary Contrary," she said.

"What does this mean?" said Father again. This time, he asked the little nurse, "Why were these Twins separated? Was it necessary?"

Miss Russell flushed prettily. But she met Father's blue-black gaze steadily.

"Doctor's orders, Mr. Dawson," she said, shrugging her dainty, white shoulders. "He thought they would rest more and gain faster, apart."

"Rest them to be apart?" said Father. There was a grim twinkle in his eyes. "No one has ever been able to keep them apart. No wonder they're sick."

"I'm not sick, Father," said Mary. Her

cheeks were pink with joy, and her eyes were bright.

"I'm as well as anything," said Rose, with a little bounce to prove it. Her cheeks were pinker than Mary's and her eyes were brighter.

"But you wouldn't eat, darling," said Aunt Rose, "and you weren't one bit like yourself."

"I couldn't eat," said Rose. "How could I when I thought Mary was so sick?"

"I couldn't either," said Mary quickly. "Oh, I was so worried over you, Rose. I thought all the time about that 'Jill' in Miss Alcott's book and how she couldn't walk."

"I thought of her, too," said Rose.

"The very worst of it was, Rosie," said Mary, "I couldn't talk things out with you."

"I know it," said Rose.

Just as usual, the Rosemary Twins went

right on talking happily to each other, paying no attention to the talk that went on about them. But somehow, Father, though he was talking to Aunt Rose and Miss Russell, managed to hear all they said, too.

"My Twins seem to be as much alike inside as they are outside, Miss Russell," he said. "And now I'm going to take charge of the case, myself. What ails Mary is chiefly lack of Rose. And what ails Rose is chiefly lack of Mary. Added to this, of course, is fright, exposure—all sorts of things they want to forget. Then comes lack of food, lack of sleep, and too much worry for two small blonde heads. Let's have some bread and milk, go to bed and to sleep. To-morrow, I'll explain things to the doctor."

"Mary and Rose shall sleep downstairs, please, Miss Russell," he went on after he

had talked a few minutes with Aunt Melissa while Rose and Mary creaked happily in the old chair. "And you in the little room next them. Then Rose can get a good night's rest up here. Don't worry any more, Rose. You should have telephoned me sooner—that's all. Mrs. Penny says I may sleep on the porch."

Hand in hand, the Rosemary Twins went downstairs. The dog limped along behind. All the others followed. Father and the Twins each had a bowl of bread and milk. The dog had a dish by himself. Every one ate the last drop and the last crumb. Then everybody went to bed and to sleep. And they all slept so late next morning, that the four little Pennies had to run all the way to school so as not to be late.

CHAPTER VI

PINK GINGHAM AND SURGEON'S PLASTER

IT was after the little Pennies had gone to school, that Father and the Rosemary Twins went out on the porch to talk things all over together, from start to finish. The dog went along and lay as close to father's feet as he could get. He had taken a great liking to Father, and Father had taken a great liking to him.

The sky was gray and quiet. A soft wind, that smelled of rain, brought down the last of the apple blossoms in showers. The clean wholesome scent of lilacs drifted around the corner of the house.

Father made Mary tell all she could re-

member about the wreck to "get it off her mind," he explained.

"There was another thing that bothered us," said Mary, "while we were apart, I mean, Father. Every one knew us apart. No one kept saying, 'Now, let me see, which is Rose and which is Mary?' "

Rose went off into peals of laughter at Mary's wrinkled-up nose and prim mouth.

"You're the best actress, Mary," she cried. I just know you'll be in the 'movies' when you grow up, won't she, Father? Doesn't she look exactly like Billy Brown's grandmother when she says that?"

"But what I'd like to know," said Father, "is why you did not ask some one about all these things that bothered you so—Aunt Rose, or that pretty little nurse?"

"Those are things we just ask each other,

Father," explained Mary. "Aren't they, Rose?"

"Of course," said Rose. "Unless you're around, Father. Aunt Rose is too pretty to be bothered, you know," she added. "And Aunt Mary is too busy. And Miss Russell we don't know very well, yet."

"Sometimes," said Father, staring at the two solemn, little faces side by side on the pillows of the old lounge, "I wonder whether there ever were or ever will be any other Twins like mine."

Mr. John Dawson had never had much use for his Twin daughters until they were ten years old. He liked boys better than girls, and up to that time, had not hesitated to say so. Then, through their efforts to get an education at the Sugar River school, he became acquainted with them,

and decided that Twin daughters like his were not found every day.

"Don't we look alike any more, Father?" asked Mary, after a long minute of silence.

Father threw back his handsome blonde head and laughed. Few people beside his Twins ever heard Father laugh. Most people thought him a stern, quiet sort of man.

"Not exactly," he said.

Rose and Mary stared at each other. It had sometimes been tiresome when people did not know them apart, but what would it be like if they always did?

"See here," said Father, reading their thoughts. "If a Mary-Twin wears a blue sort of thing—"

"It's Lissy Penny's bathrobe," explained Mary. She looked at the faded blue garment as if she saw it for the first time.

"And blue bows on her braids—"

"Trixy's doll loaned those," said Mary.

"And the Rose-Twin has on a pinkish garment—"

"Lissy's kimono," said Rose.

"With pink bows."

"Trixy's hair ribbons," said Rose.

"Besides all of which, if one Twin was upstairs and one Twin was downstairs, any one could tell them apart, couldn't he?"

"Why, of course, Father," cried Mary, much relieved. "How silly we were, Rose."

"We never once thought anything about what we wore," cried Rose, "or anything like that, did we, Mary?"

At that very minute, the same thought leaped into both blonde heads. Rose's eyes twinkled at Mary, as they had not twinkled at anything in some days. And Mary's twinkled back.

"Let's do it," cried Rose.

"Do what?" said Father.

"Go upstairs," said Rose, "and dress up in our new things."

"The ones Aunt Mary brought," added Mary. "Then we'll come down and see if Aunt Melissa and Miss Russell can tell us apart. Don't you tell them which of us is which, will you, Father?"

"I won't know, myself," said Father. "Let me see, though—maybe I will. I'm not going to tell how—that's too good a secret to share even with Twin-daughters like you."

Aunt Rose came out just then.

"Better go upstairs, Mary, and lie down for a little while," she said. "And Rose must rest, too—in the parlor. They mustn't get too tired, John. That doctor will make a dreadful fuss."

"May we both go upstairs in Lissy Penny's room for a little while?" asked Mary.

Father nodded.

"Well," said Aunt Rose, doubtfully.

"I didn't say we'd lie down," said Mary, anxiously on the way upstairs. "But Aunt Rose thinks we're going to, Rose."

"Father knows," said Rose comfortably. "And after we surprise them, we'll lie down till noon, Mary."

"Isn't it good to be doing things together again, Rosie-Posie?" cried Mary.

"I can't believe these are the same things we saw yesterday," said Rose, tumbling the new things about in the box.

"Neither can I," said Mary. "They didn't look even pretty yesterday, and today, they're lovely."

On went new underclothes, stockings, and oxfords. Hurrying fingers tied crisp black

hair bows in the place of the borrowed ones. Over all, breathlessly, they put the pink-checked ginghams.

Then two little girls peered anxiously in Lissy Penny's old mirror.

"Oh," cried Mary. Her hand flew straight to the red mark on her forehead. "I never once thought, Rose. Any one can tell us apart now."

"Why didn't I have one, too?" cried Rose. She felt of her own smooth forehead. "Wait, Mary, I know what we'll do." She giggled excitedly.

A few minutes later, arms around each other, out on the porch of the Penny Bank, came the Rosemary Twins. The little group sitting there, in the center of which was the little doctor, looked up quickly.

Father grinned.

"What's all this?" cried the little doctor,

testily. He had just assured Father that he would have no difficulty whatever in telling his patients apart.

Just at this very minute, at the top of the porch steps, arrived the four little Pennies, accompanied by the dog.

"We're Rosemary Dawson," cried the Rosemary Twins. Rosemary Dawson was the name they always used when they spoke of themselves together.

"Which is Rose?" said one.

"And which is Mary?" said the other.

"The one with the cut is Mary," chuckled Father.

"Pick her out, please, kind sir," laughed the Twins going up to him.

Across each forehead ran a jagged piece of Aunt Rose's surgeon plaster. Aunt Rose, who had been near tears of joy when she saw her beloved Twins looking like

themselves again, nearly had hysterics when she saw the patches.

The little doctor stared at them over his great spectacles.

"You can walk, then?" he said suddenly.

And before she thought at all, Rose answered.

"Of course I can, doctor," she said.

Every one laughed but the doctor. He went right on talking to Rose.

"Better take the plaster off your forehead then," he said. And the next minute, he added, "So you didn't like my treatment, eh?"

"We didn't like being apart, doctor," said Mary, anxiously.

"You didn't let us get well fast enough," said Rose.

"Well, don't try getting well too fast,"

said the doctor, testily. But the Twins were quite sure his fine, old eyes twinkled at them, through his great spectacles. "That's all I've got to say." And away he floundered to his waiting car.

"I like your little doctor," said Father slowly, as the fussy little car went down the hill. "He did just right to keep you quiet, Twinnies. Rose was hit on her spine, somehow; and things might have been serious for her. And Mary's nerves were hit; and things might have been serious for her. The only thing I wouldn't have done—I wouldn't have tried to separate Twins."

"Probably he doesn't know much about Twins, Father," said Mary.

"Rosemary Twins," added Rose, laughing. "I suppose we are queer, Mary."

"I would suggest, Mr. Dawson," said

the little nurse, "that even Rosemary Twins will need a nap right after dinner."

"Dinner?" cried Rose. "Is it dinner time?"

"Where has the morning gone to?" said Mary.

CHAPTER VII

JINNY

FATHER decided to stay at the Penny Bank until Monday, and take his Twins home with him. So far as Rose and Mary could remember, this was the first visit, more than a day long, that he had ever made with them. Father didn't like to make visits, but he really seemed to enjoy every minute of this one.

Rose and Mary almost lived on the old porch. They slept and ate and ate and slept, until even the little doctor was satisfied with their recovery. He came every day and, although he was just as gruff as

ever, the Twins caught more than one twinkle in his eyes.

"He's something like the Fritz dog," said Rose to Mary. "He looks dreadfully fierce and his voice is gruff, but he's really a good friend to you."

"He's a good friend to me," said Mary. "He's taken such good care of my forehead, Rosie, he told me to-day there wouldn't be any scar."

Miss Russell gave her patients what little care they needed. She read to them and told them stories. She planned quiet games for them to play with the little Pennies. She became so much one of the family that the Rosemary Twins told Father they simply couldn't get along without her.

Aunt Rose had stopped crying, and was her own sunny, blue-eyed self again. She spent much time planning the furnishings

of her new bungalow, which, Father said, was nearly done.

Aunt Melissa was always busy and cheery. She said it seemed good to have the old house full to overflowing again.

As for the dog, he had quite recovered. When he wanted to be noticed, he held up the foot that had been hurt and looked doleful. Lissy Penny wrote that in a week or two she and Father would come home for over Sunday. And if the dog were Fritz, they would take him back to Joe.

Sunday was a wonderful day with orioles singing overhead, dandelions shining underfoot, and sunshine everywhere. The Twins took Father and Miss Russell to the little pine tree hollow where they had spent the night after the wreck. The two little trees still clasped hands, but the pretty pink flowers were all gone.

Next morning, every one was up bright and early. The Twins were so excited at the thought of going home that they couldn't do much to help. But Aunt Rose attended to the luggage, Aunt Melissa packed lunch boxes and filled thermos bottles with hot coffee and iced milk, Father and Larry attended to the cars, and Miss Russell flew about helping everywhere. It had been decided that she should go home with them for a few days.

The four little Pennies were busy too. They had heard many a tale of Fritz's frequent runaways in the days of his wild youth—and even later. Now, they were filled with a terrible fear that at the last minute he would take it into that funny, old head of his to disappear with the cars. They talked it over and decided to prevent it. Bob found an old collar and to this

he fastened a stout rope. The rope was now passed around Trixy's stout, little waist and she held it firmly with both hands. Next it went around Pet, then around Bert, and last of all around Bob.

Sure enough, when the cars started off, the dog started, too. With him, stumbling along, all screaming and clutching at the rope, started the four little Pennies. This, with Aunt Melissa in the background, waving a friendly hand, was the last view the Rosemary Twins had of the Penny Bank. So they rounded the corner in a gale of laughter.

"Mary," said Rose, solemnly, as they reached the highway, "aren't you glad the train was wrecked?"

"I suppose I must be, Rosie," said Mary. "I'm surely glad we know the Penny Bank and the Pennies."

"And Miss Russell," said Rose.

They had lunch in a grove of evergreens where a merry, little stream made things cool and refreshing. It was the jolliest kind of a picnic. Even Father seemed to have a good time. They rested awhile after lunch, then they set out again. Miss Russell, who had been riding in the little car with Father, changed places with the Twins. For, they said, they must be with him when they arrived home.

By and by from one of the many hilltops, they caught sight of the little town nestled down in a pretty river valley. The river, itself, was just a thread of silver in the green of the fields.

"There's Laura Lee's house," cried Rose, as they came on to the main street of the village. She said it quite as if, in a year's time, it might be expected that Laura's sub-

stantial home had crumbled into dust.

"And Polly Ames's snuggled down in the hollow. Oh! I can't wait to see them," said Mary.

"There's Polly this minute," cried Rose. "And Norah's with her. Oh, Father, they don't know us—do please stop just a minute."

Father stopped just in time, it would seem, to prevent a Twin or two from tumbling out of the car. And Polly caught sight of them and screamed at them. Norah screamed, too, and both came running up to the car.

"Wasn't the wreck perfectly dreadful?" Polly was saying. And, "Have you seen your Aunt's bungalow?" tumbled out after it; while Norah reached up to hug them both and say, "Oh, but it's good to see you again, Rosemary Dawson."

Tales of the wreck, and the Twins' part in it, had been town talk in Sugar River for several days. It was no wonder that, from all sides, hands waved in welcome and good wishes pelted them.

"See the schoolhouse, Rose," cried Mary, a few minutes later. "Doesn't it look just like an old friend?"

"Norah's grown so pretty," Rose was saying, excitedly. "Oh! there's Billy. Billy!" she cried.

The car had to stop again, while they greeted Billy Brown. Then it dashed on to overtake the big one waiting for it at the end of the street.

"Look, Twinnies," cried Aunt Rose, as they came up. "Away over there, through the trees. There's our bungalow."

Sure enough, beyond the little town, the

Twins could just see some shining new roofs.

"Which hill, Mr. Dawson?" Larry was asking.

"Straight ahead," said Father. He dashed by the big car. Away they went, up, up, till it seemed that he had decided to run straight into the blue sky, taking his Twins along with him. But instead, turning to the left, he went into a big, shady yard surrounding a neat farmhouse. All its doors and windows were wide open to the sweep of fresh, sweet winds that came down from still higher hills. In the front yard, were a few late tulips, plenty of pansies, and rosebushes covered with tiny, hard buds.

On the porch stood a little, bent old woman and a tall, slim, straight little girl.

"Cynthy," screamed Rosemary Dawson. Both Twins landed on the porch. Four arms went around the little, bent, old woman who had been their nurse and housekeeper ever since they could remember anything.

Then while Cynthy turned to greet Aunt Rose and meet Miss Russell, Rose and Mary turned with slow recognition to the tall, slim, little girl. Her very red hair was parted in the middle and braided in two long, straggly braids. It gave her a funny, prim, old-fashioned look, but her gray eyes were friendly and eager.

"Is it really—Jinny Mason?" cried Mary.

"Where are you growing to?" said Rose.

"I've been at it ten years or so," said the little girl, briskly.

She had the air of being, at least, fifteen.

"Don't it beat all?" she went on, de-

lighted with the surprise her presence had caused. "I'm almost as tall as you are. Well, you see, Cynthy had to have some one 'round to help—your Aunt coming and all and you two sort of used up. And she thought of me. So she sent Jake after me. Mums could spare me now. I'm going to school down to the village and I help out before and after. I can do most everything."

"This is Jinny Mason, Aunt Rose and Miss Russell," said Mary, as Aunt Rose turned from Cynthy. "We used to know her when she was a little girl."

"Pleased to meet you, ma'am," said Jinny to Aunt Rose. And, "Pleased to meet *you,* ma'am," she added to the little nurse. She dipped her red head, in what she considered the best style.

"But, please, call me Virginia," she whis-

pered to the Twins as they all went into the house. "Jinny's so childish."

"Well," said Rose.

"If we can remember," said Mary. "Where are John 'n' the baby?" she asked. "I keep looking around for them. I can't think of one of you, without all three."

"John's a big boy," said Jinny. "And Barbie isn't the baby—there's another one now. He's named Dawson, after you," she added, proudly.

"Rosemary Dawson has a namesake," cried Rose. "Isn't that wonderful?"

"Dawson Mason," said Mary, trying the names doubtfully.

"We couldn't name him Rosemary—him being a boy," explained Jinny. "And we were just set on namin' him for you, some way."

"You were so funny and naughty that

winter, Jinny—I mean Virginia," said Mary. "Do you remember about it?"

"You bet," said Jinny. "We went somewhere on the train. And stayed all night. Wasn't that some house?"

"Aunt Mary Craig's," said Mary.

"Jinny," came Cynthy's voice from the kitchen.

"Got to go help take up supper," said Jinny. "I'll bet you're hungry."

The talk during supper, and afterward on the porch, was almost all of the new bungalow.

"I do wish John would come and stay with us there all summer," said Aunt Rose. "Your Father isn't just what I'd call social, Twinnies."

"He's just Father," said Rose.

"We like him best just as he is," said Mary.

Aunt Rose laughed.

"But I want a bungalow party," she said.

"We'll come," said the Twins, promptly.

"But you and I can't fill up seven bedrooms besides sleeping porches," said Aunt Rose.

"Miss Russell," cried Mary, "won't she come, Aunt Rose?"

"By and by," said Aunt Rose. "For a few days. But I want a whole big party of boys and girls to stay several weeks. Wouldn't that be fun?"

"Yes," said Mary, doubtfully. She looked at Rose. Rose looked back.

"Mary and I like it just by ourselves," she said.

"Well, you're not going to be just by yourselves this summer," said Aunt Rose. "Not if I can help it. I'm going to have a bungalow party."

CHAPTER VIII

LETTERS FROM MARJORY

THE new bungalow stood at the end of a long drive, edged on both sides by maples. In front, and on the west side, a beautiful lawn, shaded by tall elms sloped away to the river, which wound about in silver loops, showing here and there through the trees. On the east side, a path led under an arch, down some steps into a wonderful old garden. The path led through the garden branching off into many smaller ones. Then it climbed some steps under another arch, ran away across a rustic bridge, and lost itself in the woods. In the early spring, the lawn had been dotted with cro-

cus cups. Now, here and there, were clumps of large, single, dark blue violets.

Through her brother, Aunt Rose had bought the place. She had left the grounds about as they were. But the old house had been taken down and a new one put up. The architect, who was a friend of hers, had built it just as she wanted it.

It was not really a bungalow, but because Aunt Rose had set out at first to have a bungalow, she still called it so. And because she called it a bungalow, every one else did, too, probably always would. It had two stories, almost surrounded on three sides by porches. On the west, right up in the tree tops, was a tower, and in this tower was the most delightful room, all windows. And the best thing about it was, it could be reached by an outside stairway.

"Do you suppose we can have that room?" whispered Mary to Rose.

It was the morning after their home-coming. Larry and the big car had brought them, with Aunt Rose, to see the new bungalow. They had been over the grounds, and now the Twins followed Aunt Rose from one big, bright room to another, while she measured walls, windows, and floors.

"Why not, Mary?" giggled Rose. "Aunt Rose has picked out her own room, and so far she hasn't any guests except us."

There were so many things to see outdoors and indoors, that it was noon, and dinner was waiting, when they reached the farmhouse on the hill top. After dinner, Miss Russell and Aunt Rose went upstairs to take naps, and Mary and Rose went to sleep on the porch in their twin hammocks. When they awoke, Aunt Rose was just com-

ing out of the house, her hands full of letters. One fell to the floor. Rose and Mary both sprang to get it. Rose caught it and gave it to Aunt Rose. It was a small, yellow letter with a gold monogram.

While Aunt Rose read her letters, the Twins sat facing each other in their hammocks. They were trying to decide whether to put on their pink ginghams or their blue linens.

"I feel just like pink, Mary," said Rose.

"I feel more like blue," said Mary.

"You don't look like blue, Mary Contrary. Let's wear the pink to-day and the blue to-morrow," said Rose.

"Well," said Mary, slowly.

It never once occurred to either of the Rosemary Twins that Rose could wear pink and Mary blue.

In the midst of the pink and blue discus-

sion, Aunt Rose laughed softly. Now, she looked up from the letter she was reading.

"Do listen to this, Twinnies," she said. "It's quite too good to happen anywhere outside of a story book."

Then she began reading the yellow letter aloud.

"Dear Aunt Rose," said the yellow letter.

The Rosemary Twins forgot all about pink gingham and blue linen. In an instant they were at Aunt Rose's side, looking over her shoulder. They hadn't supposed that there was any one in the world anywhere, who had the right to call their Aunt Rose, "Dear Aunt Rose."

"You won't know anything about me maybe" (went on the yellow letter, quite as if its writer was talking to them), "but Daddy has just told me all about you—all he knows, anyway. And that's so good I'm

writing to find out more. Please don't think I'm curious—it isn't that. Somehow, I just love to discover relatives. Two years ago, I discovered a sister and brother I didn't know were mine at all.

"Last summer, I discovered a whole houseful of grandmothers. But all these relatives belonged to my own mother whom I never knew. You see she died when I was born, and I was adopted away from my own father. Well, to-day, I began thinking about my little adopted Mamma.

"She didn't live many years after she took me. But she loved me, Daddy says, just exactly like her own baby. And I said to Daddy, 'Didn't Mamma have any relatives who would be mine, too?' And Daddy said, Mamma had a sister much younger than she was and that you are the sister. Of course, I can't come 'way out to California to discover you. I'd love to—I just love to go to new places, but Daddy needs me. So does Roger. Roger's guardian is a Canadian and he's in the war, so Roger is staying with us. He isn't blind, and he's going to see all right sometime, but he can't see very well now and his eyes pain him. So he can't spare me. But won't you please come here to New York just as soon as you can? Daddy wants you to, too. We have

a lovely home. I shall hope to hear from you just as soon as this letter can get to you and one can get back to me. And do say you will come—please. I've never had a really-truly aunt—just some great-aunts.

"Yours, wanting-to-know-you-very-much,

"MARJORY."

"P. S. Isn't it too funny, Aunt Rose? But it's just exactly like me. I've never told you Mamma's name. It was Louise Dawson."

"What a darling letter," cried Aunt Rose. "What a dear, little thing she must be. Marjory — my own sister's little adopted daughter. Why didn't we know about this when we were in New York?"

Rose's round, blue eyes were staring straight into Mary's. Mary's were staring straight back. Each pair of eyes had big blue question marks in them, but neither Twin said a word.

"What beautiful paper," went on Aunt Rose. "See, Twinnies, the pretty mono-

gram—M. L. B. And just look at the postmarks. The letter's been all the way to California, following us from place to place, all the way back again. Poor little dear—what will she think?"

"Is this Marjory girl your real niece, Aunt Rose?" asked Rose.

"She'll seem just the same," said Aunt Rose, happily. "Louise lost her own little baby and took Marjory when she was only a few days old. I've forgotten what her real name was—if I ever knew it."

"She says her mother's name was Dawson," said Mary. "That's our name, Aunt Rose. Is she our cousin?"

"Why, of course," said Aunt Rose. "Your father just worshiped her mother. He's never been quite the same since she died. And isn't it lovely—Marjory will be our first guest for the bungalow party?"

"She says she can't leave that Roger boy," said Mary.

"She can bring him," said Aunt Rose. "There's plenty of room, you know. I'm going upstairs now and write her to come."

The Twins went slowly back to their hammocks. They sat down and faced each other soberly. Bees buzzed and boomed in the honeysuckle bush. From afar came the sound of Father's busy lawn mower. Inside the old house, Jinny chattered to Cynthy. The sky was blue and hot like June. The Twins had forgotten all about pink gingham and blue linen.

"Well?" said Rose, at last.

"Well?" said Mary.

"I know I'm not going to like her," said Rose firmly.

"Neither am I," said Mary. "And it's dreadful not to like your own cousin, Rose."

"We can't even tell Father we don't like her," said Rose.

"Oh no," said Mary, quickly. "We mustn't ever, ever let any one know, Rose."

Miss Russell came out just then, fresh and rosy and full of the news of a new cousin. And almost at once, Father came up and sat down, too.

"Louise's little daughter," he said, when Rose and Mary, talking together and helped out by Miss Russell, had told him about the letter. For a moment he did not seem to see his Rosemary Twins. His eyes looked back into some past that they had never known.

Rose and Mary looked at each other. Oh no, it would never do to tell Father they did not like the new cousin, when the very thought of her made his eyes so blue and tender. They must never let any one know.

"You'll love her, little daughters," he said, his eyes coming back to them. "I think I'm going to, myself."

"But you don't like girls, Father," Mary reminded him, anxiously.

"I didn't like girls," corrected Father, "until my Rosemary Twins taught me to love—two. Now, I find it quite easy to love—others."

"Supper's ready," announced a red-cheeked Jinny from the doorway. "It's pancakes, and you'll have to hustle up."

At the supper table, between mouthfuls of hot pancakes and delicious maple sirup, Aunt Rose told what she had written to Marjory. She had explained why Marjory's letter had been so long in finding her. She told about the new bungalow that was just aching for a party.

"You must come and bring Roger" (she had written). "And if you have some other little friends you would like to invite, we'd love to have you. The bungalow will be all ready the first of July. But write me soon all about who will come. Then I can think about them and plan their rooms and get acquainted with them a little. I'd love that—and so would my nieces."

She signed herself "With love for my little new niece." Then she added a post script. It said,

"By the way, these little Twin nieces of mine are your cousins. Their father is John Dawson—your mother's only brother. Your father will remember him. He lives here in this farmhouse I've written you about."

When she came to address her letter, Aunt Rose found her new niece had not once told who she was, except that she was Marjory.

"Niece Marjory is careless like her adopted Aunt Rose," she said. "It's fortunate, John, that we know her father's name."

"Every one knows David Brook," said Father.

"Why haven't you ever looked him up, John?" asked Aunt Rose.

"I left him to do the looking," said Father, "if he cared to." After a minute, he added, "Rose, don't let my Rosemary Twins grow to be as unsocial as their old father, will you?"

"That's one reason I want a bungalow party, John," laughed Aunt Rose. "Just wait and see what a summerful of youngsters will do for them."

As soon as a letter could go to New York, be read, answered, and the answer get back to the Sugar River farmhouse, another yel-

low letter arrived from Marjory. Aunt Rose read it aloud, a Rosemary Twin on each side of her, and all the others listening.

"*You dear Aunt Rose*" (it began). "Your letter sounds just exactly the way I wanted it to. And Daddy and I are so pleased to hear from you and to find you're so near us. Of course, I'll come to your bungalow party—it sounds like quite the delightful-est kind of a party. I'm just wild to know my little Twin cousins. But do let's all agree right now not to say anything more about the adopted part. I couldn't love my Daddy any more if he was my really-truly father. And it will be just the same with you all—Aunt Rose, Cousin Mary, Cousin Rose, and Uncle John. Don't they sound good?

"It's dear of you to ask Roger to come. And aren't you lovely to tell me to bring some of my friends? First of all, there's my sister—the one I discovered two years ago. She'll come if she can be spared—she's always so busy. Then, I'd like to ask a little girl named Susy Morris. She lives near my Grandmother Beach's. I'd like

to ask Joel Bernard, too. And Betty Blake and the Martie Twins—wouldn't it be fun to have two pairs of twins in one house? And Nancy Spindle, if she'll come. That makes seven besides Roger and me. I've some other very dear friends—Effie and John and David Clover and Anne Story and two Story babies. But maybe that will make too many. Daddy says no bungalow would hold us all. Do write and tell me. I love to get letters from you, Aunt Rose. Daddy sends his love. He says you were just a little girl when he married your sister.

"Your loving,
"MARJORY.

"P. S. Won't you please send me your picture, Aunt Rose? So I can know exactly how you look. I can't wait till I see you."

Aunt Rose had a good laugh over Marjory's letter. Right in the midst of the laugh, she sat down to answer it. "I'm going to tell her to bring every single one," she said. "We'll find room for them somewhere."

The Rosemary Twins went slowly out to the big swing. When they had been little girls, a woodpile had stood there. When things went wrong, they had often come to this woodpile and sat on chunks of wood to talk things over. The woodpile wasn't there any more, but father had put up a swing just the size for both Twins, to mark the place.

"We'd do it, if we liked her, Mary," said Rose.

"But we don't like her," said Mary.

"Well we ought to, Mary, and you know it."

"But we don't," said Mary, "so how can we write and say we do?"

"We needn't say anything about it," said Rose. "We'll just tell her about Aunt Rose."

"All right," said Mary. They went

slowly back to the porch. Aunt Rose had just finished her letter.

"May we add a postscript, please?" asked Rose.

Writing her very best, Mary began the postscript.

"Aunt Rose is as young and pretty as she can be" (she wrote). "You'll love her."

Then Rose added—and no one could tell where Mary left off and she began—

"She has lovely, fluffy, light hair that wants to curl and does curl around her face. And she has big, blue eyes and likes to laugh and have a good time."

Mary went on,

"She wears blue things most of the time to match her eyes. We are writing this together.

"ROSEMARY DAWSON."

Another yellow letter came back speedily, addressed to "Miss Rosemary Dawson."

"There hasn't been time yet" (it said), "to get answers to all the invitations. But I'm writing to ask you something. Are you the Twins who look so much alike nobody ever can tell them apart? I'm sure you are because you sign yourself 'Rosemary Dawson.' I saw your pictures once at Susy Morris's. Oh, I'm just breathless with excitement. Just think of my discovering you! No wonder Joey calls me 'Story Book Marjory'—such wonderful things do happen to me. You'll love Joey. He has names for everybody. He calls Susy 'Black-eyed Susan.' "

"That's Susy Morris who visited us in California," said Rose. "Didn't she have the blackest eyes?"

"I know I'm not going to like Joe," said Mary, so dolefully that Rose and Aunt Rose both laughed.

CHAPTER IX

THE BUNGALOW THAT WASN'T A BUNGALOW

EARLY in June, Miss Russell went away, promising to come to the bungalow party sometime in July.

"It does seem as if June is the shortest month in the whole year," said Rose, one day late in June, "even if it does have the longest days in it."

"I know it," said Mary.

They were spending a day with Aunt Rose at the bungalow. Some boxes of chintzes and cretonnes and other fascinating materials had come from the city. Some of the downstairs rooms were already nearly settled, others were not touched. It

was the same upstairs. But Aunt Rose was perfectly happy in the midst of all the confusion.

It was the most wonderful house—that bungalow that wasn't a bungalow. Downstairs, there was a long living room with an alcove on the west side and a den on the other. The living room was furnished in shades of tan and brown with dashes of daring orange-red here and there to match the fire, Aunt Rose said, if ever there should be one needed in the big fireplace. The den was red, too. The kitchen was to be in blue and white, and the dining room was to be in soft tan and deep blue.

Just now, they were all in the upstairs hall. It was a wonderful hall. The Twins kept forgetting that they were unpacking boxes and went for a walk up and down it. The stairs came up into it near

Aunt Rose's bedroom. Then it went the full length of the house, and at the far end, it broadened out delightfully to hold an open fireplace, on each side of which were built-in seats.

Aunt Rose was putting the finishing touches to her room. It was furnished in blue, of course—blue that shimmered and shone, suggesting the blue of far hills and deep, still waters. Rose and Mary had picked out rose color for their room. It was next to Aunt Rose's on the same side of the hall. Marjory's was just across from Aunt Rose. There was to be a water-lily room, too, and a poppy room, and a green room.

"There's some lovely morning-glory chintz somewhere," said Aunt Rose, pulling the chintzes about. "I'm going to make the little room under the tower room

into a morning-glory room. Won't that be pretty?"

"Who's going to sleep there?" asked Mary.

"I haven't any one left for it," said Aunt Rose, "if Marjory's sister sleeps with her, Betty with Martha, and Nancy with Susy." She took her list of rooms and guests out of her apron pocket and began checking them up. "Roger has a room by himself —the one across from yours. And Joe and Martin are to have the downstairs sleeping-porch or the den, just as they like. Let's see, we've heard from every one now, haven't we?"

"They're all coming except the Clovers and that Anne Story and her babies," said Rose.

It had been fun reading the letters that had come from all the invited guests. And

it had been quite easy to tell something about the writers from their letters. Roger's had been so stiff and formal that Mary had decided he didn't like girls one bit better than she did boys. Joe's had been jolly and droll. Betty's letter had been delightful and so had the one signed "Marjory's Sister." In her letter Susy had been eager to see Rosemary Dawson again. Nancy's had been quaint, and the Martie Twins had been frankly curious about the other pair of twins.

"Who is to have the tower room, Aunt Rose?" asked Mary.

"That's a secret yet," said Aunt Rose, gayly.

When every one is busy and happy, June does not last long. Almost before any one knew it, it was July. And then came the day that was to bring Marjory and Roger

—the first guests—to the bungalow party.

If that Tuesday had been made to order, it could not have been more perfect. It was all blue skies, turning to rose and gold and violet at sunset time. It was brimful of scents of sweet things everywhere.

Marjory and Roger had been spending most of June with Marjory's grandmother, so they would come on the train. Rose and Mary and Aunt Rose, who lived in the bungalow now, drove over to the railroad station in the car with Larry. And there was father from the farm in his funny little car.

Rose and Mary held fast to each other. They were very quiet. Whenever Mary looked at Rose, she saw two big, blue question marks in Rose's eyes. And whenever Rose looked at Mary, she saw two big, blue question marks in Mary's eyes.

"I feel queer, little prickles all over me," whispered Mary.

"There's the train," said Rose. "Mary Contrary, don't you ever let any one know we don't like Marjory."

Mary had just time to shake her blonde head violently, when the train came in. Almost at once, the Twins saw their new cousin. No one else in the crowd of people, getting off and on the train, could have written those yellow letters. She was all bronzy-brown from her pretty sailor hat to her stout, little boots. There was a fluff of gold hair under her hat and a flash of dark, dancing eyes below the gold. She reached them before they reached her, fairly flying toward them, and dragging Roger along, behind.

"I just knew you were you, Aunt Rose," she cried. "This is Aunt Rose. Roddy.

And these are our Rosemary cousins. Oh dear, do you always look just exactly alike? Isn't one of you the least bit different, somewhere?"

Both Twins shook their heads.

"Well, Roddy," laughed Marjory, "one's Rose and one's Mary—that's all I can say."

"How do you do, Rosemary Dawson?" said Roger. A sudden smile quite changed his face. He held out a hand to each Twin.

"And what about Uncle John?" said father, who had been waiting.

"I saw you from the train," said Marjory —she put out an eager little hand. "And I hoped you would be Uncle John."

Father attended to having the trunks sent to the bungalow. The three little girls and the hand luggage went in the back of the big car, with Aunt Rose on the front seat.

Roger rode in the little car with father. And Polly saw them and told Norah, and Norah ran over to tell Laura, and Laura telephoned Billy, and Billy told the other boys that Rosemary Dawson's cousins had come. And before night really settled down, every one in the little town knew about it.

"Isn't this lovely?" cried Marjory, as the car swept up the broad drive toward the bungalow. She flew out of the car, up the steps, and across the porch, a Twin hopping and skipping on either side to keep up with her.

"Margie never just plain walks," said Roger, as he, Aunt Rose, Father and part of the luggage came behind. "She always dances or flies."

The three little girls were waiting in the doorway when the others came up.

"It's going to be another story book summer, Roddy," cried Marjory, twirling about on her tiptoes. "I just know it is. Isn't it lovely to have everything so new? I've always visited in old houses before. Grandma Beach's is just full of old colonial things—you'd love it, Aunt Rose. But I love this new-all-over feeling, too. Don't you, Roddy?"

She exclaimed with delight all the way upstairs and began all over again when she saw her room.

"All yellow?" she cried. "How did you know about my color? From my letters? And is Roddy going to sleep in all these poppies? Won't you have sweet dreams, Roddy?"

The boy's strange, dark face brightened.

"It's great, Mar," he said.

Supper was served a few minutes later

on the porch opening from the dining room.

"I never saw so much porch to one house before," cried Marjory, who had exclaimed all the way downstairs and through the living room. "And there's a garden, Roddy, with a sundial. And there's a bridge."

"There's a tower room on the other side of the house," said one of the Twins.

"With a real outside stairway," said the other.

"Aunt Rose has the key and she won't let us in yet," said the first one.

Marjory stared at the Twins opposite her.

"I wish I could tell you apart," she said. "How did you ever think of so many lovely things to put together in one house, Aunt Rose?" she asked, in the next breath.

Aunt Rose smiled at her new niece.

"To tell you the truth," she said, "when I was a little girl I dreamed of just such a house—a big, big house in a big yard, with flowers and porches and secret rooms, just brimming over with good times and boys and girls."

"What a beautiful dream," cried Marjory. "And I'm so glad it's come true, Aunt Rose, and that I'm in it."

It was late that night before Rose and Mary found themselves alone in their own room. Sitting down among their rosy chintzes, they stared at each other.

"Well?" said Rose.

"Well?" said Mary.

"She is pretty," said Rose.

Mary nodded.

"And I never saw such pretty clothes," said Rose.

Again Mary nodded.

"But she isn't stuck up or everything," she said.

"No," said Rose.

"What I don't see," said Mary, slowly, "is where I've seen her before, Rosie."

"She looks just like some one we've seen, Mary," said Rose.

"Maybe," said Mary, doubtfully.

They undressed and went to bed. Rose was almost asleep, when Mary spoke again.

"I've seen her somewhere," she said, "but I can't think where."

CHAPTER X

THE BUNGAYLOAFERS

SOON after breakfast next morning, Larry and the car appeared at the steps of the porch to take the Rosemary Twins, Marjory and Roger to the Dawson farmhouse. Aunt Rose would be busy in the tower room all the morning, she said, so she couldn't go with them.

"There's Uncle John," cried Marjory, as the car made the steep grade into the yard. "But who is that quaint, red-headed little girl on the porch, Rosemary Dawson?"

"That's Jinny Mason," said Rose. "She's staying with Cynthy this summer."

"Virginia, these are our new cousins,

Marjory and Roger," said Mary, as they all trooped up the steps.

"Please to meet you, Rogery and Moger," said Jinny. Every one laughed—Jinny loudest of all when she saw her funny mistake. She was really quite overpowered by the elegance of the new little girl. But "she put her best foot forward," as she told Cynthy afterward. "Cynthy's in the kitchen, making cookies," she announced, her red head held high.

Four little folks descended upon Cynthy in the old kitchen. Munching crisp, molasses cookies, they set out with Father to see the farm. Marjory went wild over the swing; and Father, himself, sent her flying up, up, up into the branches of the apple tree. Then they visited the pasture, the meadow and the orchard. When they

came back to the porch, Marjory couldn't find her hat.

"I left it on the ground under the swing," she remembered. "Wait while I run and get it."

The pretty hat with its dull, green ribbon wasn't under the swing. Marjory looked everywhere for it. Just as she was about to give it up, she heard a faint stir in the branches over her head. Looking up, she saw her hat. Under it was a gleam of red hair, a flash of gray eyes and the whole of Jinny's resentful, little face.

"I don't care if I did try it on," she cried. "I ain't hurt it any."

She dropped the hat. It fell straight down, tip-tilting itself rakishly on the back of Marjory's upturned head.

"My hat," cried Marjory, clutching it.

"SHE HEARD A FAINT STIR IN THE BRANCHES OVER HER HEAD."

"But—what did you want to try it on for, Jinny?"

"My name's Virginia," said the angry, little voice.

"Well, Virginia, then," said Marjory, "what did you want to try my hat on for, Virginia?"

"To see how 'twould look," cried Jinny, defiantly. "I got a little piece of looking-glass up here."

"What for?" cried Marjory.

"I keep it up here," said Jinny. "And I climb up and look in it, sometimes, to see if my hair's too bad. It ain't so dreadful red under your hat. I wanted to see if 'twould be. I didn't hurt your hat."

Suddenly she burst out in wild, angry sobbing.

"How'd you like it," she said, between sobs, "if everybody else everywhere had a

good time all the whole time, ridin' around and havin' parties and such things? And nothin' doin' for you, except dish-washin' and cookin' and scrubbin' and a mop of red hair drivin' you crazy all the whole time. How'd you like it?"

"Oh dear," said Marjory. She was much distressed. "But what can I do about it, Jinny—Virginia?" she added hastily.

"Do? Nothin'," cried Jinny, sullenly. She wiped her eyes on her apron and gazed down at Marjory like a big, angry bird of some kind. "Just go on havin' your good times, I s'pose. Folks like you can't do much for folks like me, I guess. But I tell you I would like a good time, even if I have got red hair."

"What does she mean about her hair?" asked Marjory, as a little later, she told

the astonished group on the porch about Jinny's sudden outbreak. "I think her hair's lovely—or would be, if she combed it differently. But isn't there some way we could give her some good times, Uncle John?" she added, anxiously.

Rose and Mary spoke together.

"Couldn't she come to the bungalow, Father?" they said.

"I can't see why not," said Father. "If Rose is willing. I'll get some one else to help Cynthy for a while. I'd almost forgotten that Jinny was a little girl."

So it happened that Aunt Rose, coming down the outdoor stairway from the tower room, was met by three eager, little girls who fell upon her and hugged her and talked all at once till every one was quite breathless.

"We'll give her the morning-glory

room," cried Aunt Rose, when she'd heard the story. She sat right down on the top step to talk it over. "Of course she wants some fun—poor little Jinny. What a thoughtless person I've been. I'll phone Cynthy about it, and Larry shall take you right up after lunch and get her."

Jinny was washing dishes when the three excited, little girls burst in upon her. Her eyes were red and swollen. She had tried to curl her red tresses as much like Marjory's as possible. Now they stood out around her face in a funny looking, fiery sort of bush. When she saw her visitor, she lifted the red bush defiantly.

"I don't care," she began.

"Just listen what's going to happen, Jinny Mason," said Rose.

"Who's it going to happen to?" asked Jinny.

"To you," cried all three.

" 'Tain't nothin' much, then," said Jinny. She polished a plate vigorously, then set it down with a slam on the table.

"You're invited to the bungalow party," cried Marjory, dancing about.

"Who's invitin' me?" cried Jinny, sharply.

"All of us—and Aunt Rose," said Mary.

"She's phoned Cynthy all about everything," said Rose. "So run upstairs and get ready. We'll finish the dishes."

"Don't be long," cried Marjory, snatching the dish towel from Jinny's hand. "We're going for a lovely ride—all of us."

Jinny was not gone long. When she came back, her face was scrubbed till it shone. She wore a faded, clean, little gingham dress. Her hat was pulled down over her red hair. She carried a small bundle.

Cynthy was found and told good-by. Father had gone away somewhere. Then, with Marjory in front with Larry, and Jinny between the Rosemary Twins, they flew back down the hills. At the bungalow, the extra seats were put up, and, with Aunt Rose and Roger, they went off for a long ride in the hills.

It was nearly dinner time when they came back. Long, lovely shadows lay across the lawn. The heavy fragrance of flowers came up from the garden.

"There's a car in the driveway," said Aunt Rose. At the same minute, Marjory, leaning out from her chair, cried, "Why, there's my Daddy's car."

Marjory's father stood on the porch. Beside him, stood a little girl. She smiled eagerly and shyly as the others came up the steps.

"Lissy Penny!" cried Marjory. One hand flew out to the little girl, the other to Daddy.

"Lissy Penny!" cried the Rosemary Twins. They stared at the new girl. Then they stared at Marjory. Then they stared at each other.

"Lissy Penny!" Aunt Rose was saying.

"*Our* Lissy Penny?" cried Rose.

"From the Penny Bank?" cried Mary.

"Lissy Penny from the Penny Bank," said Marjory, gayly. "And *my* sister, if you please."

It took some time and some talking before the Rosemary Twins could really believe that the girl who had come in the car with Marjory's father, was the Lissy Penny whose nightgowns and bathrobes and slippers and stockings they had worn.

"Why didn't you tell us it was going to be *you?*" cried Mary.

"Just at first," said Marjory, "we didn't know the Twins we were to visit were the same Twins who had been at the Penny Bank. Then, of course, when Lissy began to talk about you to Aunt Melissa, she knew you were the very same ones. And then—"

"I wanted to surprise you," said Lissy, smiling. "I just love to surprise people."

"Well, you have surprised us, dear," said Aunt Rose. "Then my Marjory niece is the Margie the little Pennies talked about?"

Marjory nodded happily.

"Your picture hung in the parlor," said Mary. "I knew we had seen you before."

"You were in our wreck, too, weren't you?" cried Rose. "We saw her there,

Mary, don't you remember? The girl traveling with a maid?"

"Why didn't I see you?" demanded Marjory.

"You went down the aisle without turning around so you could see us," explained Mary.

"And if I hadn't gone down the aisle to the dining car," cried Marjory, "probably I'd 've been hurt, too. As it was, I wasn't hurt a mite. And wasn't it lucky that Fritz was found. Joe was crazy about him—"

"Is it your Joe the dog belonged to?"

"The Joe that's coming here?"

There were so many questions to ask and answer that Aunt Rose suggested they all go into the garden and talk all they wanted to, while she renewed her acquaintance with Marjory's father.

"I'm just going to call you Rosemary Dawson," Lissy said to the Twins, as they went down the porch steps. "I can't tell you apart, and I'm not going to waste any time trying to. Do you know which is which?" she asked Jinny.

"Me?" cried Jinny. "Land sakes—no. I just talk to 'em both at once. You always say the same things to 'em both anyway, so what's the difference? John always could tell 'em apart when he was little—somehow. He couldn't tell how he did it. John's my brother—he's just a half a head shorter'n me and a half a head taller'n Barb. Barb's my sister."

"Do come, Lissy," cried Marjory, "I'm just wild to know how you happened to come with Daddy. Did he pick you up at the Penny Bank?"

"Yes," said Lissy, as they went down the

steps into the old garden. "He said he hadn't seen you and Roddy for so long—not since you went to Grandma Beach's—that he just couldn't wait any longer."

Lissy waited again for Jinny. This time, she slipped one arm through hers. She wanted to hear all about the little brothers and sisters. Lissy was like that. And before they came back to the bungalow, she and the little red-headed girl in the faded gingham had become fast friends.

Meanwhile, on the porch, Aunt Rose and Marjory's father talked over old times and old friends.

"You always were a pretty youngster, Rose," Marjory's father said. His fine eyes rested admiringly on the Rosemary Twin's aunt. "And you haven't changed."

"I'm not much wiser," laughed Aunt Rose. "And I'm just as fond of good times,

as ever, David, and just as careless. Do you remember how you scolded me the day of your wedding because I boohooed right out loud after the service? And how I reached over and took my handkerchief out of your pocket where I'd slipped it to have it handy?"

They both laughed over the incident that had made such an impression upon the little-girl bridesmaid. There was so much to remember, they were quite surprised when dinner was ready.

"This is the loveliest place, Daddy," said Marjory, at the table, a few minutes later.

"Let's see," said Daddy, gravely. "How many loveliest places are there in the world, so far as you've discovered yet, Margie? The Willows? The Penny Bank? Overbrook?"

"And our home in New York," said Marjory, nodding, "and this delightful bungalow. And the farm where Uncle John lives."

"Marjory will always find the loveliest places, David," said Aunt Rose, later. She and Marjory's father were again on the porch. Marjory and the Rosemary Twins had gone upstairs with Lissy and Jinny to show them their rooms. Roger was half-asleep in the hammock.

"She's changed so," said Mr. Brook. "She used to be the most discontented little thing—sick and whining all the time. You wouldn't know she was the same child now, Rose."

"What happened to her?" cried Aunt Rose. She tried to think of the radiant Marjory, whining about everything.

"Lissy Penny—happened," said father

with a smile. "She taught her how to love and laugh and work—and live."

Later that same evening, Marjory's father went back to the city. He promised he would come to the bungalow party again before it was over.

"We make me think of the ten little Injuns," said Marjory, next morning at breakfast. "Only instead of growing less, we grow one or two more every day."

"We'll grow five more before night," said Aunt Rose. She looked up from a letter she'd been reading. "Joe and Betty and Nancy and the Marties expect to arrive in Joe's car to-day."

It was a merry crowd that came in the new car, that same afternoon. The Rosemary Twins did not find it easy to believe at first that a tall, slim, auburn-haired boy could be the Twin of a short, plump, red-

headed girl. But Betty was just what Betty should be. And Joe was so jolly and handsome that even Mary could not help liking him at once. As for Nancy, she was droll and spry and different from any one they had ever seen.

"My hair ain't so much redder'n hers," Jinny whispered to Lissy, with a nod of her head in Martha's direction.

"I do wish Martie and I could dress alike," Martha was saying, quite seriously. She gazed enviously at the other pair of Twins, alike from their pink hair bows to their black patent leather pumps.

"You might not look exactly alike if you did," suggested Joe, politely. "And I wouldn't recommend Martin's costume for you, nor yours for Martin. Where are you growing to, Miss M'liss?" he added, catching both Lissy's hands and spinning her

round and round. "You'll have to hurry, Mar, Lis will be out of sight if you don't."

Then he gazed at the Rosemary Twins, rubbed his eyes, and declared solemnly that he saw double. Betty laughed at his nonsense. She took a hand of each Twin. Never mind which is which," she said, "I'm going to love both of you."

"Hop in the car—all of you," cried Aunt Rose from the door. She waved a special delivery letter at them. "Here's word from Susy that she's coming on the afternoon train."

Tooting like mad, away went Joe and all the "Bungayloafers," as he had promptly named the whole crowd. "I didn't exactly make it up," he said. "Saw something like it in a magazine, but the spelling's mine—b-u-n-g-a-y-l-o-a-f-e-r-s. And it fits—so why not use it? We aren't going to have

time this summer, let me tell you, to say, 'Miss Elizabeth Blake, Miss Martha Wren, Miss Nancy Spindle, Miss Marjory Brook, Miss Melissa Penny, Miss Virginia—"

"Do stop your nonsense, Joe," cried Betty, as they rounded the curve above the station.

Exactly the same instant, the train panted in. But no Susy got off.

"Maybe Aunt Rose read the letter wrong," said Rose. "She does make funny mistakes, sometimes."

But Aunt Rose had not made a mistake this time. The Bungayloafers read the letter. It said Susy would arrive on the six-thirty train. And she had not arrived.

All the evening, they tried to telephone Ridgewood, but they could not get connection.

By and by, after the warm, velvety dark-

ness of July had settled down over everything, and a soft little wind had sprung up, sweet with scents of field, forest and garden, they sat on the porch and wondered this and wondered that. At last, they all went into the living room. Joe said he would try the telephone once more.

They had just closed and locked the door of the porch, when clear and sharp through the house sounded its bell. Aunt Rose, with a Twin on each side, and a background of anxious faces, hurried to the door.

Outside stood a small figure. When Aunt Rose turned on the porch light, the figure revealed proved to be black-haired, with a troublesome, black lock trying to get down into its black eyes. It wore a long red cape, and carried a small bag. A larger bag sat beside it.

"Aunt Rose?" questioned a breathless, little voice.

It was Susy. The next minute, she was in the midst of the background, or rather there wasn't any background. It all got into the foreground and surrounded Susy, pulled her this way and that, and asked her questions.

"But where did you come from, Susy?" cried Aunt Rose, for the fifth time at least. She reached over and drew Susy out of the crowd of Bungayloafers. "There's no train from Ridgewood, now."

"I came this afternoon, just as I said in the letter," said Susy. "But I forgot to stop off here. I went right along to the next station. And I had to stay there till a train brought me back. It didn't want to stop here, but a man made it. And I walked and walked trying to find the house.

Mother didn't want me to travel at night," she explained, as they all trooped out into the dining room to get her a lunch, "that's why I came this afternoon!"

CHAPTER XI

NAMING THE BUNGALOW

THE next morning, a quick dash of midsummer rain sent the Bungayloafers scampering from lawn and garden to the shelter of the porch.

"This is just the time," said Aunt Rose, laying down her knitting, "to talk about a party we are to give."

"We're quite a party all by ourselves," laughed Lissy. "Who else shall we have, Aunt Rose?"

"The little Sugar River people," said Aunt Rose. "Rose and Mary have been so busy getting wrecked and getting over it as well as getting moved, that they haven't seen much of them yet."

"Laura Lee and Polly Ames and Norah Perry," said Mary, counting.

"Billy Brown," added Rose, "and Paul and Tom—you always leave out the boys, Mary."

"Why not ask all the little Sugar River folks?" said Aunt Rose. "There's plenty of room on the lawn. And I'd like your little Half Pennies, Lissy. We could have the party on some Saturday. Then they could come Friday night and stay over Sunday."

"They'd love it," said Lissy, "and so would I."

"How about your little brother and sister, Jinny?" asked Aunt Rose. "Could they come for over Sunday, too?"

"They'd be tickled to death," said Jinny, promptly.

"Why couldn't we have a pageant?" said

Betty, "coming out of the woods, winding along that darling path down into the garden and across the lawn—oh, it would be lovely!"

"Betty's got 'em," said Joe.

"Got what? What's Betty got?" cried Martha.

"Visions, Joe means, Martie," said Betty. "He always laughs at me because I dream things out. But can't you all almost see it?"

"I can," said Lissy, softly.

They were all silent for a minute under the spell of Betty's dream. Roger could see it. Sometimes, it almost seemed that he could see such things better since his eyes were not good. Martin could see it, too. But Martha gazed wonderingly out across the lawn. She saw only grass, a fountain, and bright flower beds, all misty with warm

rain. It was Jinny who broke the silence.

"Wright says you'd ought to've put potatoes in there, Aunt Rose," she said. "They're goin' to be awful high."

Every one laughed.

"We must decide on the time and write the invitations," said Aunt Rose. "Meanwhile, I'll appoint Betty chairman of a committee of her own choosing, to look up and arrange a pretty pageant."

Betty's mother was in so many clubs, Betty knew all about chairmen and committees.

"Lissy," she said, "and Margie, Rosemary Dawson, and Roger to begin with. Maybe I'll want more later—and Aunt Rose, of course. You'll have to be on all our committees, Aunt Rose."

"Before we can have a party," said Marjory, anxiously, "I think we ought to have

a real name for the bungalow. We can't go on calling it 'the bungalow that isn't a bungalow.' "

"The bun that isn't a bun," murmured Joe.

"Let's have a contest," cried Nancy, eagerly. "Each one suggest a name—and Aunt Rose decide which is best."

The idea of a contest delighted every one.

"This afternoon," cried Rose.

"Time—immediately after lunch," said Joe. "Place — this porch. Everybody come and bring the best name you can think of."

Everybody was there to the minute. Aunt Rose, quite as interested as any of her guests, passed a pretty basket in which were pencils and slips of colored papers.

"Fifteen minutes, now, to think of the best name for my new bungalow," she cried,

when every one had a pencil and a slip of paper. "Whoever chooses the name I think most suitable, may have the honor of christening it with some sort of ceremony—"

"What's a sarah-mony?" cried Jinny.

"Like when a ship's named, they break a bottle of champagne over its prow," said Betty.

"We can't do that," said Aunt Rose, smiling, "but you must think up something just as good. And whatever you do, Jinny, we'll call it a ceremony."

For fifteen minutes, there was much wrinkling of foreheads, anxious scribblings, more anxious erasings. The rain beat a soft, steady accompaniment overhead. And when the clock in the living room struck three, Aunt Rose called, "Time's up!"

Roger collected the papers in the basket. Then he passed it around again. Every one took a paper of a different color from what he had had before.

"Now, each one read the name on the paper you have," said Aunt Rose. "I'll write them all down. Then I can think them over and decide about them."

When Aunt Rose's list was complete, she read it aloud slowly. Each Bungay-loafer listened anxiously for his own name.

"Pleasant View," read Aunt Rose, "Garden Place, Riverview, Good Times Bungalow, Bee Hive, Once Upon a Time Bungalow, Welcome Inn, Fair View, Sugar Loaf, Cinnamon Bun, Rosemary Bungalow, Rose Bungalow, The Merry-go-Round. Aren't they good?" she exclaimed, "every single one of them. I love that Cinnamon Bun

of yours, Joe. I know that's yours. And Sugar Loaf and Bee Hive."

Aunt Rose was studying her list. "But it isn't going to take me long to choose. For there's one name here, that I had already half chosen myself. It's a name I'm specially fond of. Aunt Rose smiled at her Twins, together as usual, on the porch railing. "Besides it means remembrance. And when you go away, I do want you to carry just the sweetest remembrances of this place and this summer."

"But what's the name, Aunt Rose?" cried several.

"Rosemary Bungalow," said Aunt Rose.

"I love Rosemary Bungalow," said Betty, saying the new name softly. "There couldn't be a sweeter one, nor one that fitted it better."

"I thought you chose that one, Betty," said Aunt Rose.

"Mine was 'Once Upon a Time,'" said Betty. "Because it has opened just like a lovely old fairy tale."

"Lissy?" asked Aunt Rose.

"Mine was Sugar Loaf," said Lissy, "because we're on the Sugar River."

"Mine was Welcome Inn," said Nancy. "There's a camp on the way up to Uncle Ben Baker's named that."

"Mine was Bee Hive," said Martha.

"What was yours, Mary?" asked Aunt Rose.

"Rose Bungalow," said Mary, promptly.

"And yours, Rose?"

"Merry-go-Round," dimpled Rose. She pronounced the first word as if it was spelled M-a-r-y.

"But whose was Rosemary Bungalow?" asked Aunt Rose.

"Mine," said Marjory, with very pink cheeks. "May I really christen it, Aunt Rose?"

"Of course, dear," said Aunt Rose.

"My ceremony would have been most attractive," said Joe. "If you'd only selected 'Cinnamon Bun,' Aunt Rose, we would have had those delicacies for supper."

"Would you have made them, Joe?" teased Lissy.

"You would, Miss M'liss," said Joe.

"Please, may I borrow your Rosemary Twins for my ceremony?" said Marjory. "We'll go right away now and plan it. But we can't have it till the sun comes out."

"What Joe said about my making cinnamon buns makes me think of something else, Aunt Rose," said Lissy, as Marjory,

an arm around each Twin, departed for the den. "Nancy and I've been thinking things over. We think we all ought to have some kind of work to do this summer while we're here. Not just be 'Gay-loafers.' "

"What would you like to do, Lissy?" Aunt Rose smiled at Lissy's eager face.

"We've planned it out pretty well," said Lissy, smiling back. "That is, if every one is satisfied."

"If not, what happens, Miss M'liss?" asked Joe.

"They can trade off work with some one else, I suppose," said Lissy. "Mrs. Wright, even with her daughter to help her, can't do all the work for such a big family," she went on. "Besides, we'd all like to help."

"I hope I'm not down for dish-washing," said Roger.

"Of course not," said Lissy. "We've asked each one to do something he likes to do, so far as we know. That's so we'll all be happy about it," she explained to Aunt Rose.

"And so Mrs. Wright will be happy having us," offered Nancy, with a droll smile.

"Go ahead, Lis," said Joe, "let's hear the worst at once."

"Well, you're to help mow the lawn," laughed Lissy. "It will be good for you, Joey—you're getting stout."

Every one laughed at this. Joe had been so busy growing tall, he had not taken much time to grow stout.

"Martin and Roger are to help Wright in the garden," went on Lissy. "Nancy and I are used to doing housework, so we'll help in the kitchen. Betty, Margie, and the Mary-Twin will help keep the down-

stairs rooms in order; and the Rose-Twin, Susy, Martie, and Jinny will help do the upstairs work."

"Good," cried Betty. "All in favor of Miss Penny's arrangements, please stand up and say 'Aye.' "

Marjory and the Rosemary Twins, coming back just then, were in time to get into the rising vote. After being hurriedly told what it was, they made it unanimous by loud "Ayes."

"Please, Lissy," said Rose, "can't some one change with Mary, so we can be on the same committee?"

Lissy shook her brown head.

"We separated you on purpose," she said. "So for an hour or so, mornings, we can tell you apart. Mary will be downstairs, and Rose will be upstairs," she explained to the others.

"Maybe," said one of the Twins, laughing. "Anyway, Rosemary Dawson will see that her share of the work is done."

In a wonderful after-the-rain sunset, that July night, Rosemary Bungalow was christened. All the Bungayloafers, except the three "christeners," as Joe called them, found good seats on the porch. The victrola was brought out. To the strains of the "Flower Song," Marjory, in a dancing-frock patterned after a pink rose, appeared in the living-room door and took her place in the center of the porch. As she began to dance a rose dance, which she made up as she went along, from the east and west sides of the porch came a Rosemary Twin. They were all pink and white, too. As they danced slowly along toward Marjory, they scattered roses. When they were near enough, they tossed

"JOE TOOK THE HINT, AND WITH AUNT ROSE, LED OFF IN A DANCE."

rosebuds toward her, which she caught, or missed, just as it happened. As the Twins came together, one each side of Marjory, they lifted twin bouquets of roses high. And Marjory standing below them, recited:

I'm very proud that I've the right
Upon this happy July night,
To stand before you, one and all,
And name the place we love so well.
As long as seasons come and go,
In sun or rain or wind or snow,
It is—ROSEMARY BUNGALOW!

As she said "Rosemary Bungalow," down from the loosened bouquets showered the roses.

There was wild applause at this. The victrola set up such a merry little dance that Joe took the hint, and with Aunt Rose, led

off in a dance. Martin and Martha bobbed up and down close behind them. Nancy Spindle and Susy started bravely out. Lissy piloted a red-faced Jinny about. Aunt Rose, smiling, saw Marjory hold out her arms to one Rosemary Twin, while the other hopped off with Roger.

"Mary," said Rose, sometime later, when they were in bed, a glory of moonlight showing the pink roses in their curtains, "there's something I've got to tell you."

"You haven't," cried Mary. "'Cause, Rose, I know it already."

"Do you like her too?" said Rose.

"I—just about love her," cried Mary.

"I loved her the first minute I saw her," said Rose, "only I just wouldn't let myself."

"So did I," said Mary.

"I was so afraid," said Rose, in a shamed, little voice, "that maybe Aunt Rose would

love her more than she did you, Mary. I couldn't bear the thought of that."

"I felt just that way about you, Rose," said Mary. "Wasn't it silly?"

"Well," said Rose, "I'm glad we didn't tell any one."

"So am I," said Mary.

CHAPTER XII

JINNY'S SHOWER

IN the very middle of Mary's whisper, there came a soft knock on the door. It was repeated urgently. Then, before either Twin could hop out of bed to open the door, it opened gently. Lissy came in. She was very gorgeous in a Japanese kimono Marjory had given her. But her face above its embroidered cherry blooms was anxious.

"Girls," she said, "I've found out something about Jinny that I've just got to tell you. I've told Mar to come."

At this minute, Marjory appeared. Her golden curls fell about her face. She wore something all honey-colored silk and blue

butterflies. There were tiny yellow mules on her bare feet.

"What is it, Lis?" she said, as she sat down on Mary's bed.

"I went into Jinny's room just a little while ago," said Lissy, solemnly. "At first I couldn't find her. I listened and I heard a sob somewhere. Then another and another. They came from the closet. I opened the door and there was Jinny right on the floor, crying as if she'd never stop."

"What was the matter?" cried Mary, as Lissy stopped for breath.

"At first she wouldn't tell me," said Lissy. "But after a while, she did. Girls," Lissy paused, dramatically, "she hasn't a single thing to wear."

"To the party?" asked Marjory.

"To—anything," declared Lissy. "She has just two gingham dresses to her name.

There wasn't another thing in her closet except a shabby winter dress made out of one of her mother's and that straw hat she wears and an old sweater that is really John's. She says she's going back to Cynthy's. She can get along there. Now what I want to know is, what are we going to do about it? She just loves good times and it's too bad for her to go back, isn't it?"

"She did want to come so much," said Mary.

"She can't go back," said Rose.

"She never once thought about clothes when she came that day," said Lissy. "You see, she's never been anywhere before. I know what it is not to have many clothes," she added. "There was a time not so long ago when I didn't have anything much myself. Of course, I haven't many now—not like Betty's and Mar's and

Rosemary Dawson's. But I have plenty to have good times in, and Jinny hasn't."

"We didn't have many, either," said Mary, quietly, "until we knew Aunt Mary Craig and Aunt Rose. They buy so many for us."

"Father does too, now," said Rose. "But I can remember buying Rosemary Dawson a coat out of egg money."

"I've loads of things Jinny could have," said Marjory. "But they're all home or else at Grandma Beach's or the Penny Bank. I keep a few things everywhere," she laughed, "so as to have them handy when I go visiting."

"My clothes are always made over for Trixy," said Lissy.

"Cynthy takes ours for her little grandchildren," said Mary. "But there's a trunkful—Rose, do you remember?"

"I—believe—they'd—just about—fit," Rose said, slowly.

"When she went west with Aunt Rose, last spring," said Mary, "Rosemary Dawson had everything new. And she felt so sort of sorry about leaving her old things—"

"She'd had such good times in them," explained Rose anxiously, "she couldn't bear to give them up."

"There were two of everything," went on Mary. "So we just saved out one of each of the things we liked best."

"I know ex-act-ly how you felt," cried Lissy. "I've always kept a blue-flowered dress with black velvet bows that I had when I first knew Mar—before I knew she was my sister."

"We thought maybe we'd wear them again, sometime," said Mary.

"But you don't need them, do you?" said Lissy.

"We couldn't wear them if we did," said Rose, "we've grown so in a year. Let's give them to Jinny, Mary."

"We'll go and get them to-morrow," said Mary. "Maybe they'll need fixing," she added.

"Nancy'll help me fix them," said Lissy.

"Aunt Rose will help," said Rose.

"Don't let's tell Aunt Rose one single thing about it," said Lissy. "She's doing so much for us—let's do every single bit of this by ourselves."

"I'm going to give Jinny that hat of mine she likes so," said Marjory, "the one with the green ribbon. I don't need it. And I'll give her my string of green beads that matches it."

"Come on, Mar," cried Lissy, "you'll

give away every single thing you have, if we don't go right to bed and to sleep."

The next morning, the Rosemary Twins, Marjory, Lissy, Nancy, and Joe went to the Dawson farm. The girls climbed the steep stairs to the attic. And the little trunk was opened.

Mary dived in first.

"Here's the skirt we loved so, Rose," she cried.

"And here's the coat," said Rose. "And there's a pair of shoes to match. And some stockings."

"Here are the middies Rosemary Dawson liked best," said Rose.

"And her favorite thin dresses," said Mary.

"Aren't they pretty?" cried Marjory. "This white one doesn't look as if it had ever been worn."

"It hasn't," said Rose. "I spilled ink all over Mary's the first time we had them on, and I'd never wear mine afterward."

"Aren't you funny Twins?" cried Nancy. "But isn't it lucky for Jinny that Rosemary Dawson saved this wardrobe. I'll borrow one of Jinny's ginghams to measure by and fix them in no time. They'll look just like new."

Rosemary Dawson's wardrobe was put back into the trunk. The trunk was put into the car and Rosemary Dawson sat on it going back to the bungalow. They could see Jinny's red head on the porch so they all rode to the garage. There the trunk was hidden under some robes.

"Hurry," cried Susy from the porch, as they came up the steps.

Aunt Rose jingled two keys at them.

"The tower room is ready," she said.

"Now I'm going to hand over its keys to Nancy and Joe because they're my oldest guests. They can loan them at any time to any one they think responsible."

Half the Bungayloafers followed Joe up the inside stairway to the tower room. The other half followed Nancy up the outside stairway. Nancy and Joe unlocked the doors, and the Bungayloafers trooped in.

Under Aunt Rose's skillful fingers, the room had become a forest bower. The ceiling was papered with blue, over which sailed fleecy clouds. The floor was hidden with soft, moss-green rugs. The walls—there weren't many as there were windows on all sides of the tower—showed pictured trees with charming, shadowy gray and brown distances between. Low seats ran all the way around the room. There was

a table with books and magazines. Ferns stood in nooks and crannies. All the wide-open windows looked through real wind-stirred branches of great trees away across a wonderful sweep of lawn and river, meadow and forest.

"We'll fill this room just full of good times," said Aunt Rose in the midst of the "Oh's" and "Ah's" of the Bungayloafers. "And don't let's let one cross or unhappy thought get into it."

"It couldn't stay if it did," cried Betty. "How did you ever think of it, Aunt Rose?"

"It's a part of my long-ago, little-girl dream of a houseful of boys and girls and good times," laughed Aunt Rose. "And secrets—we must have some secrets for it, children."

"A secret room," said Joe. "It was all the bungalow lacked, Aunt Rose."

"And there's one other thing I want you to do for this room," said Aunt Rose happily. "It lacks pillows. I want each of you to make the prettiest pillow you can, put your initials on it somewhere, or your names, and leave it here for me when you go."

"Where'll we get the balsam?" asked Susy.

"There's loads of it in the gully," said Rose.

"Where'll we get the tops for the pillows?" questioned practical Martha.

"I've saved odds and ends of materials for years," said Aunt Rose.

The luncheon bell sounded just here. As Joe and Nancy waited importantly to lock the doors of the secret room, Nancy managed to whisper to Lissy, "Just the place for Rosemary Dawson's wardrobe."

All that afternoon, wherever the Bungayloafers were, there was much whispering, plotting, and planning, which stopped suddenly when Jinny's red head appeared. Whatever they did, wherever they were, it went on more or less all through Sunday.

Monday morning early, Lissy slipped into Aunt Rose's room.

"Would you mind very much," she asked anxiously, "not going into the secret room to-day and to-morrow? We—we're going to have the first secret there."

"A secret from me?" asked Aunt Rose, wonderingly.

"We want to do it all by ourselves," explained Lissy.

"And please, Aunt Rose," said a blue-ginghamed Twin, who slipped in just here, "don't tell Jinny there's a secret."

"And don't let her come up in the secret

room, if you can help it," said another blue-ginghamed Twin, coming in.

Aunt Rose promised. All day long, while quiet, mysterious feet glided up and down the outdoor stairway to the tower, she seemed not to hear. But her eyes twinkled.

Meanwhile, behind locked doors, Nancy, Lissy, and Betty measured, sewed, and added finishing touches to Rosemary Dawson's wardrobe. The others did what they could to help. They could not sew much, but Rose and Mary helped press the finished garments. And some one, all the time, had to keep Jinny away, without letting her know she was being kept away.

"How shall we give them to her?" some one in the secret room was asking, every few minutes.

It was Betty who finally had an inspira-

tion. The sister of one of her school chums was to be married in August. And Betty's chum wrote Betty of all the showers that were to be given the bride.

"Girls, why can't we give Jinny a shower?" she said after she had read the letter aloud.

It was Martha, of course, who gave the word its real meaning.

"Just drop things on her and run?" she asked.

"Why not?" cried Marjory.

By Tuesday night, everything was ready. And in spite of its being one of the loveliest of July nights, warm, starlit, and sweet with dew and clover, all the Bungayloafers showed an unusual desire to go to bed early.

After Jinny was safely in her morning-glory room, a delegation waited upon Aunt Rose. They wanted to go through her

room to the sleeping porch which was on one side of Jinny's room. The rest of them were already in Marjory's room across the hall.

"Please, Aunt Rose, will you go into Jinny's room for a few minutes?" said one of the Twins, excitedly.

Aunt Rose tapped at Jinny's door. But no one answered.

She pushed the door open softly. There was nothing there but the pretty morning-glory furnishings themselves. And in the middle of them, looking much out of place, stood a dilapidated suit case. Aunt Rose peeped out of the window on either side of the room. In each sleeping porch, she could see the dim forms of Bungayloafers. Among them was no red head except Martha's bobbed one.

Then Aunt Rose heard a sound that

didn't go at all with the half-suppressed giggles and whispers outside. It was a sob, and it came from Jinny's closet.

"They haven't meant to, but they've carried their secret too far," thought Aunt Rose. "Jinny knows they're keeping something from her."

Aunt Rose opened the closet door. There with her head hidden in a morning-glory cushion, on the floor lay Jinny.

"There ain't no use," she sobbed, from the delicate, silken shelter of Aunt Rose's arms a minute later, "for Lissy to tell me to stick it out. I can't stick out nothin' in them clothes." She pointed to the solitary gingham on its hook. "I washed it again to-day and it's shrank more'n ever. I'm goin' home—that's where I'm goin'."

Still sobbing, she sank out of Aunt Rose's arms upon the old suit case. And it was

just at this very minute that Jinny's shower began. From one of the windows, a soft newspaper package came flying. It struck Jinny's head, and dropped to the floor.

Falling apart, it revealed a neat brown and green checked skirt. Even through her tears, Jinny could read the printed "JINNY" on its card. As she picked it up wonderingly, another package, aimed from the window on the other side of the room, struck her squarely on the shoulder. It disclosed a smart brown coat. Before Jinny could even wipe up the last tears, from both sides packages came flying thick and fast. Rosemary Dawson's wardrobe had been added to in many ways. Each little Bungayloafer had wanted to give something. One package brought Marjory's white sailor with its green band. Another brought a pretty brown hat which had been

"AT THIS VERY MINUTE . . . JINNY'S SHOWER BEGAN."

Betty's. The pocket of Rosemary Dawson's tan coat held some small kid gloves which were Joe's offering. There were some stockings which Martin and Roger had bought out of their allowances. In fact, that wonderful shower brought Jinny as complete a wardrobe for a summer outing as any little girl need have.

The last two packages of all—one coming from each side at the same minute—brought a string of dull, green beads and a box of dainty handkerchiefs. Each little girl had selected one from her own stock.

"How do you like showers, Miss Virginia Mason?" cried Joe's voice from the darkness outside.

"Land sake, Joe," cried Jinny, clutching fast to her green beads, "I ain't goin' to be married."

"Happy birthday then," said Betty's voice.

" 'Tain't my birthday—yet," cried Jinny.

"Well, it's your shower," said Joe.

"Well, what do you know about that?" cried Jinny. She sat down on the old suit case again, her finery piled up about her, while through the windows and door came the Bungayloafers. "Me — a shower? What would Mums say to that, I wonder? Maybe 'tain't me, really."

" 'But if it be I,' " sang Joe, as the Bungayloafers began a march round and round Jinny on her suit case, " 'My little dog'll know!' It looks like you, Jinny, your hair's still red."

"I don't care if 'tis," said Jinny.

"Come on, Jinny," cried Lissy, "you're in the secret, now."

Jinny could not take the hand Lissy held

out. Her own were too full for that. But wearing a long tan coat, a white hat, one new glove, and carrying a blue-bordered handkerchief, a tan oxford, and a string of jade beads, she joined in the march.

CHAPTER XIII

THE M. S.

"WE came to call on you all," said Laura's voice, politely, from under a blue hat so big and droopy it quite hid her face.

It was more than a week after Jinny's shower. The Bungayloafers had just returned from a delightful day in the city with some of Aunt Rose's friends, to find three callers waiting for them on the porch.

"We thought you'd be home soon, so we waited," said Norah. She smoothed down the folds of her new, dotted Swiss frock.

"We'd have been here long ago," piped up Polly briskly, twirling a new pink parasol, "but we've been motoring with Laura's

father, and we've only just returned home."

It was so funny to see their three chums so grown up, so dressed up, and so formal, that the Rosemary Twins wanted to giggle.

"We're so glad you've come," cried Rose. "We've been keeping some of the best things for you."

"We want you all to take part in our pageant," said Betty.

"There's going to be a picnic to-morrow," said Mary. "And you're all invited."

"Oh, goodie," said an eager voice under the blue hat.

"We hoped there'd be lots of picnics and parties and things," confessed Polly.

After this there was no more formality. Laura took off her hat and Polly and Norah took off theirs.

"We're all going to make balsam pillows for the secret room up in the tower," said

Martha. "We're going to get loads of balsam to-morrow."

"Look up some more boys to help," said Joe. "Three of us are not anywhere near enough for so many charming girls."

"Billy and Paul and Tom," said Rose.

"Tom's cousin Harry is visiting him," suggested Norah.

"Tom, Dick, and Harry—let's have them all," cried Joe.

"Tom, Paul, and Harry," corrected Polly.

"It'll be almost like the old M. S. we had the year Rosemary Dawson went to school," cried Norah.

"What was the M. S.?" asked Lissy. "It sounds mysterious."

"It was, Lissy," laughed Rose. "It was the Mysterious Seven. There were supposed to be just seven of us. Then when

Rosemary Dawson turned out to be two, there were eight. But we agreed never to change the name."

"I move that the Bungayloafers be allowed to join," cried Joe. "Can't we be the Mysterious Dozen and a Half?"

"If we still count Rosemary Dawson as one," said Betty, "we'd be the Mysterious Seventeen."

Then and there, without consulting the absent members of the M. S., the Bungayloafers were made life members of the society. Headquarters for the summer was to be the secret room, and to it those present flocked immediately.

It rained a little early the next morning. But perhaps the clerk of the Weather Bureau saw all the disappointed little faces looking out of the windows of Rosemary Bungalow. Anyhow, he decided to post-

pone the rain, and sent the sun scurrying to dry up the wet places.

"And the rain's made everything so fresh and green and sparkly," cried Marjory, as they all left the cars and followed a path down into the gully.

All up and down the sides of the gully climbed the rows of balsam trees. And up and down the sides of the gully climbed the M. S., the boys with hatchets, the girls with bags. When the bags were full and it was time for lunch, they were a tired, hot, and hungry crowd.

Afterward, when for some days it seemed impossible to talk about anything else, every one remembered that it was while the M. S. ate their lunch on the rocks by the river that the first mention of the pearls belonging to Marjory and Lissy was made.

THE M. S.

It all began by Betty's talking about the pageant. The committee, after many meetings and much discussion, had decided that characters from the children's favorite story books should be represented, and that the pageant should be called "Our Story Book Friends." Every one wanted Betty to be "The Sleeping Beauty."

"I haven't a string of pearl beads with me," she said. "And how can I be a princess, without pearls?"

"Aunt Rose has some," said Rose. "But they're in California."

"Lissy has some pearls," said Marjory. "A lovely, little string of them—you could wear them, Betty. Couldn't she, Lissy?"

"Really truly pearls?" cried Betty.

"Mar knows they're hers, not mine," said Lissy, soberly.

"Let's tell them," said Marjory. "And see what they think."

"Any one would know they were yours, Mar," said Lissy.

"It sounds mysterious enough even for the M. S.," said Joe.

"It is," said Marjory. "It's just like a story book, Joey. It all began last summer when Granny—Lissy's and my great-grandmother, you know—gave us each a little string of pearls that had been our own mother's. Why no! It didn't begin there—it began long, long before that. Where did it begin, Lissy?"

"I don't know where it began," said Lissy. "The pearls have been in the Beach family for ages seems to me. But when our mother married Peter Penny, her grandmother—that's Mar's and my great-grand-

mother—gave her a little wooden box for a wedding gift."

"And in that box were the pearls," cried Marjory.

"It's such a curious old box," went on Lissy. "It looks simple enough. And it unlocks with a tiny key. When the cover is up, it looks like any other box inside. But if you slip the key back in the lock and press hard, up flies what you thought was the bottom of the box, and there, between it and the really truly bottom, is quite a good-sized space. In there, were the pearls. But mother never knew it. And Papa Penny didn't know it. They used to give the box to me to play with when I was a little bit of a girl. I can't remember when I didn't have it. I loved it better than anything else and when I went away from home, I always carried it. Last

summer, when I went to The Willows to see Margie, I took the box along with my sewing things in it."

"One day," went on Marjory, as Lissy paused for breath, "when Granny was sick, she saw the box. She insisted that the pearls were in it. Lis and I thought she was out of her head. But just to please her, we opened the box as she told us to, then put the key back in the lock and pressed it hard—and up flew the bottom of the box, and there were the pearls."

"But hadn't the rest of your family—the Beaches—ever missed them?" cried Betty.

"They thought Granny had them hidden away with her treasures," said Lissy. "They were hers, anyway, you see."

"Granny had them made into two strings," said Marjory. "One for Lissy and one for me. They were just exactly

alike. The only way we could tell which was which was to keep Lissy's always in the wooden box and mine in their new, blue case. It didn't matter, then, for of course we couldn't wear them."

"Marjory's father and mine both said they were too valuable for little girls to have around, anyway," said Lissy. "They tried to get Granny to say they might keep them for us until we grew up. But Granny wouldn't. She said they were ours and we could keep them ourselves and wear them, if we wanted to. Granny is so funny and sweet—just like a child, herself."

"Well, we worried about what we'd ever do when we did begin to wear them," said Marjory. "We're together so much, you know. And if both strings got left on the dresser for half a minute, we'd never know which was which again. Papa Penny

thought of a splendid way out. There were two rings of mother's he had kept for us, one with a blue stone and one with a yellow one."

"Those are our colors, you know," explained Lissy.

"So Papa Penny suggested that we have the blue stone set in the clasp of Lissy's beads, and the yellow one in mine," went on Marjory. "We took the pearls to a jeweler's in the little white boxes marked 'Lissy' and 'Marjory.' Next comes that day last spring when you telephoned, Joey, about Fritz—the day of the wreck, you know. Papa Penny had promised to take me to the Penny Bank to surprise them, but at the last minute, he couldn't go. So Daddy said Annette and I might go on the train."

"I couldn't go," said Lissy, "because the

new Penny baby had just come to John and Doris. And I was keeping house for John."

"I wanted Fritz to take part in a show we were putting on," said Joe. "I phoned Mother, and she said Mar was coming to Brookside and maybe she'd bring him along as far as there and leave him to the baggage man the rest of the way. That's how Fritz came to be in the wreck, you see."

"Annette and I went in the car to the station," Marjory went on. "When I went by the jeweler's, I just had to have my pearls to take along. Of course, it was foolish. Annette didn't want me to, but I promised her I wouldn't open them until we were safely at the Penny Bank. So she went in after them. Only one string was done. And she didn't think to ask which

one it was. I put the package into my traveling bag. Oh dear, I can't bear to tell you the rest of it."

"I'll tell it, Mar," said Lissy, looking at the eager circle of faces about them. "When Mar got to the station they had just time to get Fritz into the baggage car. Your mother had brought him down, Joe. And he acted just like—Fritz. On board the train, Mar didn't once open the pearls. But she thinks, maybe, she did have the package in her lap."

"I took it out and looked at it once or twice," said Marjory, "and wished I could open it."

"Annette and Mar went into the diner," went on Lissy. "And just at that very minute, before they even sat down at the table, came the accident. The traveling bag with the pearls in it has never been seen since.

But was it her fault that the pearls were lost?"

Lissy paused, dramatically.

"You couldn't help the accident, Mar," said Betty.

"No," said Marjory. "But I ought not to have taken the pearls with me. Well, of course," she went on, "we couldn't tell which string was lost till we phoned the jeweler's that night. A friend of Daddy's was in the wreck and he got a car and took us right back home, that same night. We didn't feel like making a visit just then. And we knew how Daddy would worry when he heard."

"Which string was lost?" asked Martha.

"The one with the blue stone," said Marjory.

"So Mar has given me hers," said Lissy. "But I'll never want to wear it."

"That's where we began," said Marjory. "Lissy has the string here in the old box. You see, she's going to Grandma Beach's from here, and Granny'll ask about them. Betty can wear them when she's the princess."

"Would I dare wear such wonderful old pearls?" cried Betty.

"Anything else in that lost traveling bag you cared for, Mar?" asked Joe.

"Nothing except my bead bag," said Marjory.

CHAPTER XIV

BALSAM PILLOWS

THEY were still talking about the pearls when they loaded the bags of balsam into the cars. It was Roger who finally changed the subject. The subject of the lost pearls wasn't as new to him as it was to most of the others.

"There's one thing about it," he announced, tumbling a heavy bag of sweet-smelling balsam into its place. "I can't make a balsam pillow even for Aunt Rose. And I'm not going to try."

"If I did make one, she'd never want to use it," said Martin slowly.

"Gee," cried Billy. "We fellows haven't

got to make the pillows, have we?"

"We've done our part cutting balsam," said Tom.

"I believe you have," said Betty, dropping down on a bag of balsam. "Why can't the girls make the covers and the boys help fill them? I'll make yours for you, Roddy."

"I'll make yours, of course, Martin," said Martha. "Only," she added, "Nancy'll have to help, I expect."

"I'll make yours, Billy," Jinny volunteered, "if Nancy'll show me how."

"Rose and I are going to make a rosemary pillow," said Mary.

Laura agreed to make Paul's with some help from her sister Emily. Susy said she would make Tom's. Lissy kindly offered her help to the new boy, Harry.

"That fixes every one but me," said Joe

gloomily. "Suppose you make mine, Mar?"

"All right, Joey," agreed Marjory, "if Nancy or some one will help me."

"Partnership pillows are ever so much nicer," said Polly. "Let's make ours together, Norah."

"Nancy's left out," cried Martha. "Nancy hasn't any partner at all."

"As near as I can count," laughed Nancy, "I'm in most of the partnerships. If I've any time left, I've a perfectly splendid idea for a pillow of my own."

"Miss Russell will be here soon," said Rose, eagerly, "if you do need a partner, Nancy."

"That makes ten or 'leven pillows," said Mary, who had been trying to count the prospective pillows. "That's enough for a beginning. Aunt Rose says every guest she

has in this house all summer must make a pillow for that room. Isn't she funny?"

"I think it's a lovely plan," said Betty. "I'm going to have all my friends make pillows for my house when I have one of my own."

"Do let's get started," cried Marjory, "so we can select our covers. Let me sit next you, Joey, so we can plan ours."

Joe's car, Aunt Rose's with Larry driving, and Mr. Lee's with his chauffeur, were all heaped high with balsam bags and members of the M. S. When they reached home, they found a great box of different colored tapestries, cretonnes, and chintzes standing in the den.

"Don't let's let Aunt Rose know which is which till they're all done," said Lissy.

So, with much secrecy, whispering, and

giggling, the Bungayloafers made their selections. There was much disagreement over a delightful pattern of oak leaves and acorns—Jinny and Susy both wanting it. Polly and Laura, too, had a heated argument over a pine bough and pine cone pattern. There were the cords of bright colors to be chosen, too. Nancy and Lissy mounted guard over these, and, so far as possible, prevented too glaring combinations. It was growing late. The members of the M. S. were tired. Colors were not the only things that clashed. Several sets of feelings were out of harmony. But the delicious cocoa, sandwiches, and cakes served on the porch had a most soothing effect. And the guests departed in the Lee car, scarcely able to wait for Monday to begin on their balsam pillows.

Still later that night, helping to spread

out the balsam to dry, Marjory found a Rosemary Twin at her side.

"That little bead bag, Margie?" she said, in a low voice, "the one you lost in the wreck—what kind of a bag was it?"

"Oh, just a little bead bag," said Marjory. "It had a big, red rose on it and a big, blue lily and the darlingest little church. And there were blue beads sort of fringed across the bottom—you would have loved it, Rosemary Dawson."

Not long after, Marjory was still kneeling on the fragrant balsam, when a Rosemary Twin again asked in an anxious little whisper,

"What kind of a bead bag did you lose, Margie, the day of our wreck?"

"You must be the other one," laughed Marjory. "Well, the bag was one I found in Granny's things, Rosemary Dawson. It

had a blue church and a blue lily and a red rose. Oh, and a gold chain—and my initials on the clasp. Why?"

But the Rosemary Twin was gone.

It was still later on that eventful balsam-scented day. Rose and Mary were both brushing out their long, blonde hair. At her twenty-fifth stroke, Rose stopped short.

"Mary Dawson," she said, solemnly.

Mary was at her twenty-seventh stroke.

"Well?" she said.

"It must have been Margie's bag I carried with me out of the wreck," said Rose, slowly. "She says it had a blue church and a blue lily and blue beads and a red rose. Didn't that one? I've sort of forgotten. And did we leave it in the pine hollow where we slept, Mary? If we did, of course, it's spoiled by now."

Mary shook her head.

"I don't know where we left it, Rose," she said, "but Margie's bag isn't in that little hollow now. Unless I dreamed it, that very same bag, blue church and all, is in the tiptoppest bough of the old apple tree outside Lissy's window."

Rose stared at Mary's solemn face.

"How on earth could it be?" she said.

"I put it there," said Mary. "That dog brought it from somewhere."

Both Twins sat down in their nightgowns on Mary's bed. In whispers, Mary told all about that dreadful night when all she could think of, anyway, was how sick her Twin was, and of how she had hidden the bag in the apple tree.

"I've never once thought of it since, Rose," she said. "Do you suppose it's

there yet? The leaves were so thick around it, no one would ever see it."

The Twins stared at each other a long minute without speaking. Then Mary told the thought that was in each head.

"We ought to get it for Marjory," she said.

"It would make up a little to her for losing her pearls," said Rose.

"Besides, Rose," said Mary, the pink deepening in her cheeks, "I've always been so ashamed to think we didn't want Margie to come or to be our cousin—"

"I know it," said Rose, her cheeks as pink as Mary's as she remembered. "We really ought to do something extra nice for her to—to—sort of make up, oughtn't we?"

"Let's get the bag," said Mary.

"How can we?"

"We'll think up a way to-morrow," said

Mary. "I've twenty-three more strokes to give my hair, Rose."

"I've twenty-five," said Rose.

Early next morning, the Twins climbed the stairs to the secret room. A thorough search of house and porch had not revealed Aunt Rose. But here she was, at last, writing letters. The Twins were unusually sober, but Aunt Rose did not notice that. Aunt Rose was so much taken up with the letter she was writing, that she did not think much about either their questions or her answers just then.

"Aunt Rose," began Rose, "if you'd lost something that belonged to some one—"

"Not just exactly lost it, Rose," interrupted Mary, "but put it somewhere—"

"And it was something that the some one thought a great deal of—"

"What would you do about it?"

"Get it and give it back," said Aunt Rose, smiling at something she had written.

"No matter if it was hard to get it?"

"No matter," murmured Aunt Rose.

"It's like this," said Mary, wanting to be very sure about things. "We—know where something is that belongs to Marjory. That is, maybe we do. Ought we to get it, if we can, and give it back, even if it's going to be a lot of trouble?"

"Why of course, dear," said Aunt Rose.

Rose and Mary went slowly downstairs, through the crowd of Bungayloafers on the porch, and found a quiet corner in the garden under the big blue-and-white Canterbury bells.

"It isn't quite as good as the swing at home," said Mary, "but maybe we can think it out here."

"I wish Father was home," said Rose.

"Well, he isn't," said Mary. "And I'm not going to tell any one else about it till I know if the bag's still there. Now, listen, Rosie, I'm going to the Penny Bank to-morrow morning—I can get back to-morrow night, can't I?"

"I don't know whether we can or not, Mary," said Rose. "But we can try it. We'll have to tell Aunt Rose though—what will she think's become of us? And all the others, too?"

"Rose," said Mary solemnly, "*we're* not going. This is one time when we've got to be separated. One of us must stay here and be both of us—don't you see? So nobody'll know we're gone."

"How can one of us be both of us, Mary?" cried Rose.

"It can be done," said Mary. "But of

course it's going to be dreadfully hard work."

"Well, you'll have to do it then, Mary," said Rose. "I never can. I'll go and get the bag."

"Would you — honestly — just as soon, Rose?" cried Mary.

"I'd heaps rather," said Rose. "I could never be both of us for a whole day."

"I'd much rather do that," said Mary, "than go on a train. I can't bear trains since our wreck, Rosie."

"I'll go," said Rose. "Do please let me, Mary."

The matter was not quite decided till that night, when Betty said,

"Let's all get together to-morrow morning as early as we can and try out our parts, a little, for the pageant. Let's see—Mar's

Cinderella, Mary's Alice in Wonderland—who is Rose to be?"

"I can't act a bit," cried Rose. "That's one thing Mary and I are different about."

"I'm glad there's one thing," laughed Betty. "Well, every one come on the porch, then, after our work's done—don't any one forget."

"That settles that," cried Rose, as soon as she and Mary were alone. "If you leave me to act 'Alice,' Mary Dawson, I'll never forgive you. I'm going to get Margie's bag."

"We'll have to go to-morrow," said Mary, "'cause after that, there'll be rehearsals every day till Saturday. Are you sure you'd just as soon go, Rosie?"

"I'd love it," cried Rose. "That is, Mary," she added, "as much as I could love anything without you in it. It will

be sort of a lark, as Joe says. And it can't take very long. I'll just run up from the train to the Penny Bank, tell Aunt Melissa about it, get the bag, and run back to the station in time for the next train."

"Suppose you can't find it," said Mary.

"Well, if I can't, you couldn't either, Mary. I'll find it if it's there, and if it isn't, I'll just come back and we'll tell Margie all about it—that's all."

Early next morning, the Rosemary Twins stole downstairs. Mrs. Wright and her daughter, who slept at home, would not be there for an hour. They ate a hurried breakfast on the kitchen table, for Lissy had said something about making johnny-cake for breakfast, and she might appear at any minute. They cleared the table, washed the dishes, and put them away all as quickly and quietly as possible.

"If the boys do hear us," said Mary, "they'll just think it's Lissy making her johnny-cake."

That was just what Joe did think, roused from a dream by a faint clatter from the kitchen. He rolled over comfortably and went back to sleep.

No one saw the Rosemary Twins as they sped down the driveway, and disappeared in the direction of Sugar River village. No one met them on their way through the deserted streets to the early train. There was no one they knew at the station. The train was coming. Rose had just time to buy her ticket and climb aboard.

"Oh Mary," she cried, leaning from the window, "remember how Joe said the other day, he could tell us apart if he half tried? We'll show him, I guess."

CHAPTER XV

MARY TRIES TO BE TWO

AFTER seeing her Twin off, Mary went laggingly along the back streets and side streets, trying to use up as much of that dreadful day as she possibly could.

"I won't tell any lies about anything," she decided. But she wondered a little, if even George Washington, himself, could have carried through such a situation without doing so.

When at last she arrived at Rosemary Bungalow, all the Bungayloafers were on the porch waiting for her.

"Where have you been?" cried Betty.

"Aunt Rose has been looking for you," said Lissy.

"Breakfast's all et," said Jinny. "I mean eaten," she added.

Since Jinny had dressed like the other Bungayloafers, she was trying to talk like them, too. It hadn't mattered much, she told Lissy, when she looked so unlike them if she did talk unlike them. But now she felt that she must live up to her pretty clothes. Lissy understood exactly what Jinny meant, and she promised to help all she could.

"We had our breakfast early," said Mary.

"Where is the other one of you?" cried Joe.

"She'll be here—by and by," said Mary. "I'll go and tell Aunt Rose we aren't lost," she added, making her escape as quickly as she could.

"Hurry," called Marjory after her, "'cause we're arranging our parts."

Mary went through the living room and dining room to the porch. In the far corner of that, she found Aunt Rose.

"Both of us are all right," she said, anxiously. "There's something we have to do to-day, Aunt Rose. Please don't ask me any questions about anything, whatever happens, will you?"

"Another surprise?" cried Aunt Rose. "All right, dear."

Aunt Rose went back to her letter. Aunt Rose was always answering letters nowadays, Mary thought. She went slowly along and turned the corner of the porch, wondering how she could explain to the Bungayloafers why Rose didn't come. But she found things, just now, surprisingly easy. The Bungayloafers had just seen a

Rosemary Twin disappear into the living room. Now they saw one coming from quite the opposite direction around the corner of the porch. So they immediately mistook her for the other Twin and hailed her with glad shouts.

"The other one of you has just been here," said Nancy, making room for Mary to sit beside her. "And she'll be right back. Which one are you anyway?"

"Mary," said Mary.

"Well, Mary's the one we especially want just now," said Betty. "So we won't wait for Rose. You know you're to be 'Alice in Wonderland.' I'm going to ask Mother to send you a frock—a blue frilly one. And you must wear white stockings and strap slippers. I'll have Mother send a White Rabbit costume, too—we'll put one

of the little Pennies in it. Won't that be fine?"

Mary was so excited over taking the part of her adored "Alice" that just for a minute she forgot all about her Twin journeying alone to the Penny Bank. She had never heard of sending straight to New York for everything you wanted to help out in theatricals and pageants. She and the other girls had always thought out costumes and made them, as best they could, out of attic trunks and spare-room closets.

"Won't that be lovely?" she cried. "What's every one else going to wear?"

"Joe's going to have a Prince Charming costume," said Betty. "He's going to wake me with a magic kiss—or something that will look like it to the audience. Joey's not fond of kissing—even his little sister, are you, Joey?"

"Margie's 'Cinderella' part will be gorgeous," cried Nancy. "She's going to wear her silvery-gray slippers with buckles."

"A pumpkin coach for Cinderella," said Betty, making a note of it on her pad.

"Billy's decided to be a cowboy," said Susy, from the doorway. "Laura's just phoned. And Tom wants to be a clown."

"Cowboy," said Betty, writing as she talked. "And clown. What's Paul's?"

"'Oliver Twist,'" said Lissy.

"Mother'll send my French peasant costume," said Susy, "so I can be 'The Little French Cousin,' Betty." Susy's mother had been a really, truly little French girl, and all her children had wonderful French outfits.

"Splendid," said Betty. "Now, every one's arranged for except four—Nancy, Norah, Laura, and Rose."

"I know," cried Marjory. "When you said 'four,' Betty, it came to me. They can be the four 'Little Women.'"

"Good for you, Mar," cried Betty. "Nancy for 'Meg,' because she's oldest; Norah for 'Joe'; Laura with all her fluffs for 'Amy,' and Rose for 'Beth.'"

"I hope Rose will be willing to take Beth's part," said Mary, anxiously. "She does hate to act."

"Where in the world is she, anyway?" cried Marjory. "I never knew her to be away from you so long. Have *you* seen Rose?" she asked Aunt Rose, who was just coming out.

"She was on the porch with me just a few minutes ago," said Aunt Rose. "I'm looking for Mary."

"Mary's here," said Betty.

Mary's slow dimple came out as she re-

alized that Aunt Rose had mistaken her for Rose, and so unconsciously helped out now. Just then, Father's noisy, little car was seen turning into the driveway, and she flew down the steps, down the drive, and met him halfway to the porch. He slowed down, and Mary climbed up on the running board.

"Where's Mary?" asked Father, as they came slowly along.

"I'm Mary," she said. "Oh, but I'm glad to see you, Father."

"I can't stay," said Father. "I reached home late last night and am off again now. But I want a glimpse of you."

"Please let me ride a little way with you, Father," said Mary as they passed the fountain. "I—I want to dreadfully."

"Where's Rose?" said Father. "Don't want to go without her, do you?"

"No, but I'll have to," said Mary. "Rose is all right, Father, but she isn't here. She's gone on an errand."

Father knew something wasn't quite right with his Twins. Could they have had the first quarrel of their lives?

Just at this minute, they reached the porch and the Bungayloafers came swarming about the car.

"Father wants me to go a little way with him," said Mary.

"We'll pick up Rose," Father added.

Mary waved her hand to the Bungayloafers and rode away. When they had reached the highway, Father asked quietly,

"You and Rose quarreled, Mary?"

"Quarreled?" gasped Mary. "Why Father John Dawson, of course not. How could we? Don't we always think alike about things? It's—it's—well, it's sort of

a secret. That is, if Rose was here, probably we'd tell you—just you and nobody else. But you see, I promised I wouldn't tell before I knew I was going to see you. Maybe it's going to be a lovely surprise for Margie. And maybe it isn't. But we don't want to tell till we know."

Father wasn't much wiser after Mary's explanation, but he pretended to be.

"But why so solemn about it, Mary?" he asked.

Mary dimpled.

"It sounds funny," she said, "but it's solemn, too—this part that I am going to tell you. I'm trying to be both of us while Rose is gone, so nobody will know she is gone."

Father laughed long and loud.

"I don't wonder you're solemn, Mary," he said, "trying to be two. That's worse

than when both of you tried to be one, isn't it?"

"Yes," said Mary, "'cause then I had Rose to help. But I hope this won't last long, Father. I must get out now and run back. When they see me, they'll think I'm Rose—at least, I hope they will."

Of course they did. They were so anxious for Rose that when a bareheaded and breathless Rosemary Twin came running up the driveway, they all rushed to meet her.

"Didn't Mary and your Father find you?" cried Jinny. "Now don't that beat all?"

"Mary's gone with your Father for a little ride," explained Nancy. "They thought they'd find you."

"Miss Rose Dawson has been chosen to appear in the coming pageant as 'Beth

March,' one of the world-renowned 'Little Women,' " said Joe.

"Will she do it?" asked Betty, slipping a coaxing arm around Mary's shoulders.

"Maybe," said Mary, dimpling delightfully.

"It won't be hard," said Lissy, her arm around Mary, too. "Beth was such a quiet, little thing, you know. And you'll wear lovely old Civil War costumes. Betty and Mar and I have seen it in the 'movies.' "

"Everything's all arranged then," said Betty. "I'll write Mother. And, Rose, will you phone the girls—they can tell the boys—that we must have rehearsals every day till Saturday!"

Mary was glad to run away to the telephone. She hoped the Bungayloafers would break into groups soon. It would be easier to be two, if only they would.

She phoned Laura and Norah and told them about their parts and the rehearsals.

When she came slowly out on the porch again, Lissy and Nancy, fixing some costumes, hailed her gladly as "Mary." In the garden, a minute later, Roger and Joe called her "Rose." Down by the orchard, the Marties called, "Hello, Mary!" And Aunt Rose, gathering flowers in the garden, said, "Well, I'm glad you're back, Rosie-Posie. And you must be starved, you had such an early breakfast."

By lunch time, Mary scarcely knew who she was. She dropped down in Rose's place, not thinking what she did. She and Rose often exchanged seats anyway, just for fun. But how on earth were both Rosemary Twins to have lunch? She hadn't once thought about meals.

"What have you done with Mary?"

asked Lissy, looking at the Twin with the empty chair beside her.

"I keep telling you I'm Mary," said Mary.

"Where's Rose?" said Aunt Rose.

"She'll be here," said Mary. Her eyes sought the clock. In just a few hours Rose would come back. Rose was having the hardest part, Mary reminded herself. If she could go alone to the Penny Bank, she, Mary, ought to be able to get through this lunch, somehow. Right after it, she would go upstairs and stay all the afternoon and let the Bungayloafers think what they pleased.

"Rose was in the garden a few minutes ago," said Roger, positively. "Martin and I both spoke to her."

"Rose is planning a surprise for us—or the Rosemary Twins are," said Aunt Rose,

trying to help out. "So we mustn't ask too many questions."

Something else helped out just then. Mrs. Wright's face appeared at the door that led into the kitchen.

"Please, Mrs. Norris," she said, "some one to see Jinny."

"Me?" said Jinny.

"Run along, dear, and find out who it is," said Aunt Rose.

"Is the surprise about to begin?" asked Joe, staring at Mary.

Before Mary could answer, or Jinny could run along or do anything more than push back her chair, two children wriggled around Mrs. Wright's ample form and made straight for Jinny.

"We've come," cried the stocky, little boy. He was the picture of Jinny, even to his flaming hair. "Barb and me's come,

Jin. Your letter said, 'Come on Friday,' but we had a chanst to come along to-day so Mums let us. She and Dawsie's went visitin'."

"Here we be, Jin," cried the little girl. She was the picture of Jinny, too, except that she was short and stout like her brother.

Evidently talking came easy to all the little Masons. Jinny took her small brother and sister upstairs to the morning-glory room to make them ready for lunch. And Mary, pushing back her chair, said she'd go and help.

A few minutes later a red-cheeked Rosemary Twin slipped in from the porch.

"You're late, Rose," said Aunt Rose. She drew out a chair. "But never mind—you're just in time to eat with John and Barbie."

If this Rosemary Twin did not eat much

dinner, no one seemed to notice it, for Jinny and John and Barbara did all the talking. And while it looked to the rest of the Bungayloafers that the Rosemary Twins were both fed as usual, it felt to Mary as if one Twin had eaten two, or at least, one and a half dinners.

"Rosie-Posie," said Joe, after lunch, "will you and your Twin accompany Miss Virginia Mason, Mr. John Mason, Miss Barbara Mason and myself on an auto trip to town this afternoon?"

"Mary can't go," cried Jinny, before Mary could gasp any answer whatever. "She's just got to read up 'Alice in Wonderland'—she said so upstairs when she was helping get John and Barb ready to eat. She said she did hope every one would let her alone."

Mary laughed hysterically.

"If you want me," she said, "I'll go."

"Do you know," said Joe later, as he helped Mary into the front seat of his car, "you look just like Mary to me."

Mary stared at him with startled eyes.

"Don't I always?" she asked.

Joe still eyed Mary so closely that the blood came up into her cheeks.

Suddenly she laughed and her red cheeks showed twin dimples.

"Mary—hates—boys, Joey," she said, slowly.

"You don't look as if you hated me," said Joe.

"I don't," said Mary, promptly.

"Then you must be Rose, I suppose," said Joe. But Mary thought he did not look fully convinced.

CHAPTER XVI

PEARLS—LOST AND FOUND

ROSE waved her hand to her Twin at Sugar River station. She watched as long as possible the forlorn, familiar, little figure plodding along homeward. Then she decided she might as well get what enjoyment she could out of her journey. It was really just the kind of an adventure she liked. If only Mary could have gone, too. Rose chuckled a little as she pictured poor Mary trying to be two in that careless, curious crowd of Bungayloafers.

"Mary'll do it somehow," she decided.

It was fun watching people, wondering where they had come from, and where they

were going. It was fun, too, to watch the green country-side slip past the windows. It was exciting to roll into towns, with now and then a city, and watch the crowds get on and off. After a while in one of the towns a big express train rushed up behind them, rushed by and rushed straight on, never once pausing for breath.

When they went on their leisurely way again, Rose found she was getting hungry. The next time the conductor came along, she stopped him.

"What time do we reach Brookside?" she asked him, in her most grown-up manner.

"Three-thirty," said the conductor.

"Three-thirty?" cried Rose. "Are you very sure, please? Because Mary thought I'd get there in time for dinner."

"The express gets there at two—it's just

passed us," said the conductor, as he went on.

"And he knows every single thing about trains, of course," Rose concluded.

She drank some water. Water would keep you from being too hungry she had heard somewhere. It did not seem to do much good, however. She bought some chocolate bars of the train boy and they helped some. As she munched, she wondered if she hurried as fast as she could, if she could not find the bag and still get back to Mary that night. She must—Mary could never go on being two for more than that one day.

It was a tired, hungry, anxious Twin who left the train at Brookside that afternoon at about four o'clock—almost a half hour late. Rose thought of Mary among the Bungayloafers on the big, cool porch.

Already, maybe, she was half expecting her home. She must hurry. She ran up the hilly street from the station, but when she turned the corner and began to climb the sandy hill to the Penny Bank she had to stop running. It was so hot, she could not even walk fast. She had to walk slowly. At last, however, she came in sight of the Penny Bank. On the porch were Aunt Melissa and a pretty, young woman with a baby in her lap. They saw her and after just an instant of surprised wonder, Aunt Melissa dropped her knitting and came hurrying down the walk to meet her.

"It's one of those blessed Twins," she said. "But for the life of me I don't know which one."

"I'm Rose," said Rose. "And please, Aunt Melissa, may I go right up into Lissy Penny's bedroom, where Mary slept, and

look for something she's left there, and then go right straight back home again?"

"Why bless your heart, dear," cried Aunt Melissa. "Do sit down and cool off. It's too hot to hurry about anything to-day. This is Mrs. John Penny, Rose—the Doris Lissy talks so much about. And this, if you please, is Miss Geraldine Penny."

Rose was glad to drop down on the porch. She was really too tired and hot to do anything else.

She told the whole story to Aunt Melissa and Doris Penny. She and Mary had decided that would be the best thing to do. Geraldine Penny cooed and gurgled and gazed at her with big pansy-blue eyes, like Lissy's, as she talked.

"Well, just to think of that!" cried Aunt Melissa. "Margie's little bead bag that her Granny gave her. Lissy told us it was

lost. I wonder if it's up in the tree yet. 'Twill be a miracle if 'tis and if it isn't spoiled. Wasn't it a dreadful pity the child lost her pearls? I do hope the old Granny'll never know about it."

But when Aunt Melissa realized from Rose's story that the little girl had had nothing to eat since breakfast, she forgot bead bags, pearls, and everything else of that nature. She went at once and brought out bread and butter, milk, fruit, and cookies. And Rose was so hungry, she decided she would eat first and then look for the bag.

She felt much better after her lunch and rest. She and Aunt Melissa climbed up the dark, narrow stairs to Lissy's room. It was dark, cool and quiet. Doris and Geraldine had the downstairs bedroom, Aunt Melissa said.

"No one has slept here since you went

away," she added. She bustled about, rolled up a shade, pushed up a window and opened a blind. The warm summer air came in, sweet with clover.

"It was this window," said Rose, "by the big apple tree."

Aunt Melissa put up the shade of that window. She opened it and both blinds. The blinds swished out through green boughs.

"Mary said to climb up on the sill," said Rose, "lean out, and look straight up."

Rose climbed up on the sill, Aunt Melissa holding fast to her for fear she would fall. She leaned out, tipped back her head and looked up. At first she saw nothing but the hot blue of the sky through a green tracery of leaves and small, hard, green apples. But peering anxiously here and

there, at last she caught a gleam of gold that was not all sunshine.

"I do believe I see it, Aunt Melissa," she cried. "And I can reach it."

Another minute, and Rose held the pretty bead bag in her hands. There were the red rose, the blue lily, the blue church with its black steeple, and the green trees. But almost all the blue fringe was gone.

"It isn't hurt much, is it, Aunt Melissa?" she said. "And won't Mary be glad? And Margie? Oh, but I'm glad I came."

Aunt Melissa was chuckling to herself as she looked at the bag.

"Where do you suppose some of that blue-bead fringe is this very minute?" she said. "Bob pointed it out to me the other day. It's woven into a bird's nest down in the old lilac bush. You shall see it for

yourself, dear. We couldn't think what on earth it was—just a thread of bright blue mixed in moss and dried mud and other things. Let's just show the little bag to Doris, and then we'll put it in a box and do it up carefully before the little Pennies come home. They'll be crazy to see it and some of the beads on the church-steeple are just ready to fall out now."

By the time Aunt Melissa had finished, she and Rose were back on the porch. Doris touched the old bag with gentle fingers.

"Tell Lissy and Margie about the little bird who helped herself to the fringe, Rose," she said. "They'll just love that."

Rose waited impatiently while Aunt Melissa did up the bag.

"I'd love to wait and see the little Pen-

nies," she said, "but I mustn't. Mary will be so anxious. I must go right straight back, Aunt Melissa."

"Not till after supper," said Aunt Melissa.

"You can't go back to Sugar River tonight," said Doris. "The local's gone and the express doesn't stop there, you know. You'll just have to stay with us all night. Is that so terrible?" she added, at sight of Rose's face.

"Oh, I just can't stay all night," said Rose. "You see, Mary can't go on being both of us any longer. Don't you see she can't."

"We'll call her up," said Doris, "and you can tell her all about things."

But when Doris was given Rosemary Bungalow, Mrs. Wright's voice said Mary Dawson was out.

"Of course, she's out," cried Rose. "No matter how much she'd want to stay home and wait for me to come, she'd have to keep going somewhere—first as Mary, then as Rose. Oh, poor Mary!"

"But why doesn't she tell them?" asked Doris.

"We didn't want Margie to know till we knew whether the bag was safe or not," explained Rose anxiously. Then a long-lost dimple suddenly showed itself, and she added, "and then too, it is such fun to tease the Bungayloafers."

"She'll tell your Aunt Rose and she'll help out," said Doris. "Anyhow, don't worry, dear—look, here are the little Pennies."

The next minute, Rose was surrounded by little Pennies. And before long, there was a wonderful supper. Afterward, Doris

called up Rosemary Bungalow again, but Mary Dawson was still out.

In spite of a baby to be undressed and put to bed, in spite of all the devoted little Pennies, it was a long evening. Just before bedtime, Mary Dawson was reported in. And in a minute, her anxious little voice talked to Rose.

"Every one's on the porch," it said, "so they can't hear. Nobody knows yet, Rose, unless maybe Joe suspects. But I feel like a dozen, at least. You see, John and Barbie came to-day—and that has helped. Joe took them and Jinny and me to ride, and we stopped at the farm for supper. Of course, Cynthy thought you were at the bungalow. And the Bungayloafers thought we were both at the farm. And it was dark when we got home. But how I'll manage to-morrow, I don't know. Do

come as early as you can, Rosie. I'm so glad the bag was all right."

In spite of Trixy's warm little body snuggled up to her, in spite of getting up very early to catch the first train back to Sugar River, that was the longest night Rose had known, since those just after the wreck when she had been separated from Mary. But when she was dressed and downstairs, Aunt Melissa had a good breakfast all ready for her.

"And I've found a chance for you to go back to Sugar River in a car," she said. Hal Green's going and he'll take you. It'll be quicker and cooler—it's going to be another hot day."

So it happened that Rose reached Sugar River much earlier than Mary expected she would. She left Hal Green in the village and ran all the way to Rosemary Bun-

galow. Inside the yard, sitting in a bit of shrubbery, she found a disconsolate Mary. She was knitting something out of dull-blue wool. Beside her on the rustic seat was an open copy of "Alice in Wonderland."

"Oh Rose," she cried, dropping her knitting with a clatter of knitting needles. "How did you get here now? They've called and called us—in another minute, I'd just had to 'fess up. Have you the bag?"

"Oh yes," cried Rose, rapturously returning Mary's hug, then dropping down a minute to get her breath. "Doesn't any one know, Mary?"

"Aunt Rose does," said Mary. "You see, Rose, she came into our room last night. She had just remembered what we asked her about Sunday morning, when she

was writing that letter, and how we had said something would be hard to do. When she saw there was only one of us there, she was so worried that I told her all about everything. She was dreadfully anxious at first to think you had gone all alone, but when I said you had phoned and the bag was found and everything, she laughed and said she'd help me keep our secret till you came to-day. And she has. But no one could have kept it much longer. Because, last night, Lissy took her box of pearls up into the secret room to show them to us. Aunt Rose wouldn't let her take them downstairs for fear they'd get lost, or something. Lissy wanted every one there when she opened the box—it's that queer one, you know. But Joe and Jinny and John and Barbie and I were all gone, so she waited till this morning. And this

morning, every one was there but you. And I said I would come out and look for you. But I knew you couldn't get here till the train did—and I was most desperate."

Mary stopped at last entirely out of breath.

"Well, it's all over now," said Rose. "Let's go in and give Margie the bag and tell them everything. What are you knitting for, Mary?"

"I had to do something," said Mary. "And I found this wool in my knitting bag. The rest was in the suit case and lost in the wreck you know, Rose. But Aunt Rose thought maybe there was enough to make Jinny a dear, little slip-on. I wound the extra skein."

"Well, here you two are at last," cried Nancy's voice from the porch. "We were

all just turning out to search the grounds for you."

Across the porch, through the living room, up the stairs, one flight, two flights, went the Bungayloafers, into the secret room. Every one was there, now, except John and Barbie.

"Never mind them," said Jinny. She put the *th* in "them" importantly to match the crisp green and white gingham she was wearing. Jinny really looked pretty this morning. She wore a quaint little breakfast cap that Betty had given her. It was just the color of the green in her dress, and it hid most of her flaming tresses. "They don't know anything about pearls, anyhow. Barb's never heard of 'em—them. And John don't care for a single living thing except machines and such things."

But the pearls had to wait after all, for

the Rosemary Twins looked so radiant and excited that every one knew at once that something delightful had happened or was going to happen.

"What is it, Rosemary Dawson?" cried Betty.

"I've been gone a whole day—and not one of you has known it," cried Rose. Then right in the midst of all the questions that came from all sides, she held a small paper package high over her head.

"You can't guess what I have in this package," she said.

"But where have you been, Rose?" said Betty, "if you are Rose. And how could you have gone anywhere at all for a day and we not know it?"

"I've been both of us, Betty," said Mary, hopping up and down in her excitement. "Honest I have. Rose has been to the

Penny Bank, to find something we left there—oh, listen, everybody!"

"It's yours, Margie," said Rose. She dropped the package into Marjory's hands.

"Mine?" cried Marjory.

"Open it, quick," cried eager voices on all sides of Marjory.

Marjory pulled off string and paper.

"My bead bag," she cried, staring at Rosemary Dawson. "But how could you have found it? It was lost in the wreck."

"It wasn't lost," said Rose. "It slipped out of your chair, Margie. We found it when we went to look for Mary's ball of wool. I had just picked it up when the crash came. And when I came to myself —oh, ever so long afterward—I was still clutching it."

"I suppose we dropped it under the trees where we slept that night," explained

Mary. "And probably that dog found it. Anyway, he brought it to me one night when I was up in your bed, Lissy. And I tried to hide it, but he kept finding it. So finally, I put it up in the apple tree—you know how close it is to the window. And it's been up there ever since."

"Bless his heart," said Betty, softly. She was thinking of the old dog she and Joe had known and loved for so many years. "He always does take part in things, somehow, doesn't he?" said Joe.

"We never dreamed it was yours, of course, Margie," Rose was saying, "till the day you told about it."

"I'd forgotten everything about it anyway," said Mary, "till then. And then, I was so afraid it wasn't there or was spoiled or something. So Rose went—and I stayed —why, what is it, Mar?"

Marjory had opened the bag and dived down into it. Now, she brought out a small, square package. She tore off its wrappers, disclosing a white box. Inside the box was a blue velvet case. And inside the case, on a lining of soft, blue satin, their one blue stone glinting in the sunshine, lay the lost string of pearls.

CHAPTER XVII

PEARLS—FOUND AND LOST

"THE pearls," cried Marjory, staring at the lovely pink-white things. "Where on earth did they come from?"

"The pearls?" cried Mary. "Oh Margie, we never knew they were in the bag."

"You never said they were in the bag, Mar," cried Rose, at the same instant.

"I didn't know it myself," said Marjory. She was gazing fascinated at the string of pearls. "How did they get into the bag? Does any one know?"

"You said you had the package out of the traveling bag," said Joe. "Didn't you

just slip it into the bead bag, Mar, and forget all about it?"

"That's just exactly what I did," cried Marjory, as memory slowly brought it all back to her. "I remember now. I thought they'd be safer there. Then I supposed, of course, I put the bead bag back into the traveling bag. And I didn't. It slid out of my lap. Oh, I am dreadfully careless. Daddy is right."

Marjory gazed from one to another of the Bungayloafers, with great, distressed, dark eyes. Joe's smiled back into them.

"Well, Mar," he said, "it was a good thing, this time, that you were careless. If you had put the pearls into the traveling bag, you would never have seen them again. And if you'd put the bead bag into the traveling bag, you would never have seen

it again—or the pearls, either. So there you are."

Every one laughed.

"But just the same, I'm never going to be careless again," cried Marjory. "Even if it did work this time, Joey, it wouldn't next."

Marjory spun round and round the table, the pearls glinting softly, whenever they caught the light.

"Do put them away somewhere, Mar," said Lissy, nervously. "I expect every minute they'll fade away and be lost again."

"I'll put them just where they belong—on your neck," cried Marjory. "Oh, won't Daddy be glad? I'll phone him just as soon as he gets home."

"Now let's all look at Marjory's," said Lissy, one hand holding fast to the string

of pearls around her neck, "with the topaz in the clasp."

Lissy knelt down on the floor beside the low table where the old box had waited its turn. She turned its tiny key in the lock. Up flew the cover. There was nothing to see inside, except the faded, silk lining.

"Now watch," said Lissy, softly. "The key goes in again—so. Then you push—so. Then up flies the bottom of the box, lining and all, and in the space underneath, all wrapped up in tissue paper, you'll see Margie's string of pearls."

Lissy had only pretended to push the key as she talked. But now, with every one craning to catch the first glimpse of the second string of pearls, she really pushed. Up flew the false bottom of the old box just as she had said it would. But the extra space was quite empty!

"Why, where are they?" cried Lissy. She sprang up, shaking the box and turning it upside down. "Did some one take them out—just for a joke?"

She looked from one face to another. Each one was almost as anxious as her own.

"Of course not, Lis," cried Joe. "No one of us would play such a joke as that on you. They must have slipped out in your room."

"How could they slip out, Joey?" said Lissy, slowly. "The box has been locked ever since I came. And no one but Mar and I know where I've kept the key. Besides, after I brought it up here last night, I opened it, took out the pearls, wrapped them up, and put them in again. Didn't I, Mar?"

"We wanted to be sure they were all

right," said Marjory. "I saw Lissy put them in again and close the box."

"Mar's are found and Lissy's are lost," cried Martha.

"Oh, but they can't be lost," said Aunt Rose. "They must be around here somewhere."

"Were they up here all night, Lis?" asked Joe.

"Yes," said Lissy. "And I did leave the key in the box, Joe. Because both doors of this room are always locked, you know. I thought it would be safe."

"Was the outside door locked?"

"Yes," said Mary. "I came up after we came home, Joe, to bring the rosemary pillow. I locked the door, myself, and gave the key back to Nancy."

"Mercy!" cried Nancy. "Don't look at

me like that, Joe. I didn't take the pearls, did I?"

"Of course not," said Joe. "Probably no one has taken them. But where are they? We've all got to think and think hard."

Every one had something to say. Could this have happened? Could that? Had some one come in from outside? Even if they had, as Joe said, no one would have known how to use the little key the second time.

"You told how at the balsam picnic," Roger reminded Lissy.

"But no member of the M. S. would have opened the box," cried Aunt Rose, "even if he remembered how."

In the midst of the talk, Jinny had disappeared. No one had noticed it. But now, on the stairs outside, came the sound

of feet—feet that hurried and feet that dragged. Jinny's voice scolded, John's voice blubbered. Next minute, into the secret room, burst Jinny dragging with her a dirty, disgusted John.

"There," panted Jinny. She deposited John as near Lissy as she could get him. Then she straightened her green cap. "Tell her what you did—every last word of it, John Mason."

Johnny still blubbered. Then came something that sounded like, "I didn't do nothin'."

"Put '*g*'s' on your words and tell 'em," said Jinny, sternly.

"What did you do, dear?" said Lissy, gently. She was used to small, blubbering boys.

"I just turned the key 'round," wailed John.

"He just can't seem to leave keys alone," said Jinny. "He has locked and unlocked everything in this house already, over and over."

"Go on, Johnny, please," said Lissy. "What did you do then?"

"The box opened and I put the key back in," said Johnny. "Honest I did. I pushed it in good and hard so it wouldn't never get lost. And the whole bottom flewed right up."

"Yes," said Marjory, breathlessly, "and what then?"

"Why, I tried it over again," said John.

"Then what?" said Jinny, sternly. "Tell 'em every bit, John."

"I just locked it all up again," said Johnny. "I left it just like I found it, just like Jinny says I must always. I did, honest. What makes the bottom come up?"

he added, his eyes going back to the fascinating key.

"But where are the pearls, Johnny?" cried Marjory.

"Didn't see no pearls," said Johnny.

"He don't know nothin' about pearls," cried Jinny, forgetting her own *g*'s in her indignation. "Course not—it's just keys John's after. 'Tain't what's locked up inside of things. Johnny ain't no thief, I'll have you understand."

Jinny tossed her green-capped head. Her eyes snapped dangerously.

"But maybe he just turned the box over, or something—try to remember, John, what you did," begged Lissy.

"Course I turned it over 'n' over 'n' over," said John, "else how could I find how it worked? I ain't never seen such a little key before," he added.

Every one began to search for the lost pearls. Books were moved about. The wastebasket was emptied. Some of the Bungayloafers got down to peer under the table and under chairs. Others searched behind the new pillows.

Into the midst of this strange crowd, came the other members of the M. S.

"What on earth are you playing?" cried Polly, just a breath ahead of Billy's "Somebody lost something?"

"Lissy's string of pearls is gone," said Marjory.

"The ones she told about the other day," explained Roger.

Of course, the newcomers had to be told all about everything that had happened during the day before and that morning. Afterwards, there was a great deal of talk. Every one had some opinion to offer.

Laura wanted to know if they trusted all their help. And when Aunt Rose assured her that they did, Tom's cousin Harry reminded them that gypsies had gone through town the day before.

"Don't worry, Lissy," Paul said to Lissy who sat, quite pale and quiet, beside Marjory, "the M. S. will find them for you."

"We must have our rehearsal," said Betty, with a glance at her wrist watch. "Why, it's lunch time, now."

"We've brought our lunch, Betty," cried Norah. Don't you remember? We're going to picnic in the woods and have an outdoor rehearsal afterward?"

"Of course," said Betty. "I'd forgotten everything but the pearls. The costumes have come from New York," she added.

While the others all flocked down to the den to see the big box of costumes that Mrs.

Bernard had sent from the city, Lissy and Marjory lingered behind. Lissy took the string of pearls off, put them into their blue case, the blue case into the white box, and the white box into Marjory's hands.

"They're yours now," she said. "Anyway till yours are found. That's exactly what you said when mine were lost, Mar," she added, as Marjory shook her head.

"Let's give them to Aunt Rose," said Marjory, "to keep for us."

After the rehearsal that afternoon, while the others all talked about the coming pageant, Joe came back to the bungalow. He went upstairs into the secret room. It was flooded with late afternoon sunshine. Shadows of leaves and twigs danced across the gay assortment of pillows.

Joe sat down and tried to think, all by himself, what had, or might have, hap-

pened. The box of pearls had been on the table. John had tipped it bottomside up. Maybe he had dropped it once or twice. Anyhow, the pearls must have fallen out. All wrapped up in soft paper, almost anything might have happened to them. They might have been stepped on, brushed up, even burned up. Or John might have put them into his pocket—not thinking anything about them at all.

"My father'd find them, somehow," said Joe to himself. "I must do my best."

CHAPTER XVIII

A RED PIGTAIL

"ROSEMARY DAWSON," said Nancy's voice outside the Twins' door late that same night, "let me in a minute, will you?"

"I've just finished my pillow," she explained, a minute later, "and I want to take it up to the secret room to-night. I want some one to go up with me and help hunt for Lissy's pearls. Martie's sound asleep and the others, too, so far as I can make out."

"Mary's been reading to me from 'Little Women' to help me take Beth's part," said Rose. "That's why we aren't undressed yet."

"We'll have to go by the outside stairway," whispered Nancy, as they went out into the hall. "My key unlocks that door, you know."

It was very dark as the three girls crept up the stairs to the tower. Halfway up, Rose nearly fell over Joe sitting there all by himself.

"I'm trying to think what could have become of those pearls," he explained.

"Come on—we're going to look for them," said Nancy.

The four went on quietly, Rose still ahead with the key, Mary close behind her, Nancy with her pillow, and Joe, last of all. On the top stair, Rose paused.

"Sh-sh," she said, warningly, "there's some one here."

Mary joined her on the landing. Joe

and Nancy just behind looked over their heads.

The upper part of the tower door was glass. A solitary light had been turned on in the room, so the four outside could see everything inside plainly. Under the light stood Jinny. She was still wearing the green and white gingham and the favorite, green cap. She was fumbling about on the table. Just at this minute, she knocked off a big pair of shears which fell noisily to the floor. Jinny started nervously with a quick movement, to hide something she held in her hand. She listened a minute, then like a flash she picked up the shears and ran across the room. She tossed the new balsam pillows about wildly till she found the odd-looking green and yellow one she had made for Billy and herself. She ripped open one corner and thrust whatever she

had in her hand down into it. Then she stole hurriedly out of the room, closing the door noiselessly. They heard the key turn in the lock. They heard her light footsteps as she went downstairs to the morning-glory room.

All this had happened so swiftly that the quartet on the landing had not moved. Mary and Rose had clutched each other. Joe's hand had closed down over Nancy's arm.

When everything was dark and quiet again, they still stood staring at each other.

"She borrowed my key just before I came out," said Joe, slowly.

"But Jinny wouldn't take the pearls," said Rose.

"Of course she wouldn't," said Mary. "You mustn't think she would, Joe."

"I don't think she would," said Joe, "unless—"

"Unless what, Joe?" cried Nancy, nervously.

"Unless she found that John did something with them and she wanted to shield him," said Joe.

"She'd make him tell," cried Nancy. "It can't be that, Joe."

"Maybe it wasn't the pearls she had at all," said Rose.

"Maybe not," said Joe.

"What could it have been?" said Mary.

"I don't know," said Joe.

The four went slowly back down the stairs, Nancy carrying her forgotten pillow along. "What shall we do about it?" the Rosemary Twins asked together at the foot of the stairs.

"I don't know," said Joe again. "Any-

way, don't let's tell a soul about it, yet. I can't believe Jinny would do anything like that, even to help John out. It isn't a bit like her."

"She might not realize how valuable they were," said Nancy. "Jinny hasn't known much about pearls in her life, any more than I did when I was a little girl."

"Jinny'd tell if she knew anything about them," said Rose. "I know she would."

"Jinny always tells things right straight out," said Mary. "Please don't think Jinny took them, Joe."

"I don't," said Joe. "Once when I was just a kid and didn't have any friends, every one in school except Betty thought I'd taken a purse. I hadn't, of course. But I've never forgotten how I felt when every single thing looked as if I had. I know Jinny didn't take the pearls, but if

she's trying to help John out some way, I want to help her—that's all."

"John might have dropped them and stepped on them and smashed them—or something," said Nancy, excitedly. "And Jinny wouldn't know what to do."

The Rosemary Twins had dreadful dreams that night in which pearls, pillows, and keys were strangely confused.

"I do wish Lissy Penny'd left her old pearls at home," said Rose, crossly, as they dressed the next morning.

"There's the pageant, too," said Mary. "And I can't seem to give my mind to being 'Alice.' All I can think of is pearls."

Every one was at the breakfast table when the Rosemary Twins slipped into their chairs. Jinny again wore her green cap. Mary and Rose could not help thinking she

did look red-faced and uncomfortable some way. Just as quickly as she could, she excused herself and went upstairs to begin her work there. Rose looked at Mary anxiously. Mary looked anxiously back. Both looked at Nancy. She was looking at them, her droll little face worried. Even Joe's good-natured face was sober.

At lunch, every one was unusually quiet. Marjory had just talked with her father, telling him that while Lissy's string of pearls had been found, her own had disappeared. Aunt Rose, looking at the row of sober faces on either side of the table, suddenly discovered that Jinny still wore the green cap.

"A cap's all right enough at breakfast, Jinny," she said. "But at lunch, I'd rather see your hair."

"Yes'm," said Jinny. Her face turned almost as red as the one lock that showed under the cap.

Again Rose and Mary looked at Joe and Nancy. And of all the Bungayloafers, their faces and Jinny's were the most uncomfortable.

That afternoon, a dress rehearsal took place on the back lawn. Jinny was there as Topsy. A funny, kinky wig now hid her despised red tresses. She did not take her part very well. She was not the only one. Prince Charming forgot the important kiss until an indignant princess sat up and reminded him of it. And Alice made the Mad Hatter very mad, indeed, by asking him suddenly to think hard and see if he could not remember whether or not he had dropped the pearls out of Lissy's box. On the whole, the rehearsal was a failure. It

lasted so late, the town members of the M. S. had to run home. And the Bungayloafers, themselves, ate dinner in their story book costumes, because there was not time to change them.

"The lost pearls are going to spoil our pageant," said Betty. "We can't think of anything else."

Soon after dinner, Jinny went upstairs, saying she was going to put John and Barbie to bed. "There's going to be a thunder storm, and they're dreadful scared," she explained. She did not come down again. The rest of the Bungayloafers sat out on the porch, watching the slow approach of the storm and talking softly about the pearls and the pageant. Just before the storm broke, Father's car dashed up the drive.

And to every one's surprise, in it, with

him, was Miss Russell. He had been near her home, he explained, and had brought her along. He would not stop a minute because he wanted to get home before the storm broke.

There was so much to tell Miss Russell and so much to show her inside the bungalow, that all the Bungayloafers, except Joe, went in. He sat there a long time while the storm broke, drenched everything, and rumbled along on its way. Joe was so deep in his problem of where the pearls had gone, that he scarcely noticed the storm. Then all at once, instead of the rain, he heard footsteps on the wet grass. Looking up quickly, he saw Jinny, still in her Topsy wig, steal around the corner of the house. The next minute, although he could not see her, he was sure he heard her on the outside stairway to the tower. Without a

word, he went into the house, where just inside the door, he met Nancy.

"She borrowed my key," she said. "Every one's gone to bed except Aunt Rose and Miss Russell—they're in the den talking. Let's go up the inside stairway."

At the foot of the stairs, the Rosemary Twins joined them.

"What is it?" they cried.

Although the four tried to be very quiet, Betty's door flew open, then Marjory's. And the next minute, all the Bungayloafers were crowding about the foot of the stairway to the secret room. Those behind pushed the four ahead straight on up the stairs to the little landing at the top.

"You might as well go in, Nance," said Joe. "We couldn't keep them out now, anyway."

Nancy unlocked the door. She and Joe

were pushed into the secret room, just in time to see Jinny straighten herself up and drop the green and yellow pillow. As the others came trooping in, she turned and faced them. Her face was red and one fly-away red lock peeped out wildly from under the Topsy wig, now very much on one side of her head.

"Well, what do you all want?" she demanded.

Rose and Mary crossed the room and took their places one on each side of Jinny. Nancy and Joe followed them. Whatever came out, the four were determined to stand by Jinny.

"Just looking for the pearls, Jinny," said Lissy, quite unconscious of any unusual disturbance. In fact those who had come up behind the Rosemary Twins did not know that Jinny had come up ahead of them.

"Let's look under all these balsam pillows again," she went on, briskly. "And, Roddy, spread down a newspaper and let's go through everything in the wastebasket again."

As she spoke, Lissy caught up Jinny's pillow and gave it an energetic little shake.

"You didn't sew it very well, Jinny," she said. "See, it's all ripped on one side."

"I don't care if 'tis," cried Jinny. "Whose pillow is it, Lissy Penny?"

"I'll help you fix it," went on Lissy. "Here's the workbasket. Look through the workbasket, Mart. The pearls might have got in it, some way. Here's my thimble—and a needle's threaded. It won't take a jiffy—it's just the outside cover that's ripped. Why what's the matter, Jinny? Don't you want me to fix it?"

For Jinny had dashed across to the table

and snatched the pillow from under Lissy's arm.

Every one's eyes were on Jinny, now, where she stood defiantly hugging the queer, little green and yellow pillow to her.

Some one reached for it, laughing, and tossed it back to Lissy who was waiting to sew the end. Lissy caught it, Jinny sprang for it, caught at it, dropped it, and Susy picked it up.

"Why there's something in it," she cried. "Feel—there's a little bunch here."

"What's in your pillow, Jinny?" Joe said, quietly. He was sorry for Jinny's distressed little face under the funny wig. "Take it out and show it to us. Let Jinny take her pillow, Sue."

Susy handed the pillow to Jinny.

"I—can't," said Jinny.

"Why can't you?" said several voices.

"I can't," said Jinny again. Her voice was muffled in the pillow which half-hid her face.

"What is the matter now, children?" said Aunt Rose's voice from the open door. "Why aren't you in bed?"

"Jinny has something hidden in her pillow, Aunt Rose," explained Marjory, breathlessly. "And she won't show us what it is."

"You—show 'em," cried Jinny. Quite suddenly, she flung the green and yellow pillow at Aunt Rose. "I don't care if I did," she cried, dashing back her tears and tossing her head.

Two things happened at once. Jinny's defiant toss was too much for the Topsy wig. It lurched crazily, hung for a brief instant, and then fell off. At the very same minute, Aunt Rose's groping hand came

out from the balsam pillow. In it was a long straggly braid of hair. The last time the Bungayloafers had seen that red braid it had adorned Jinny's head. They turned from it to gaze fascinated at that same head. Deserted by the Topsy wig, it was still red —redder than ever it had seemed. But it had been closely cropped. One lock, longer than the others, hung down behind. Evidently Jinny's reaching scissors had not found that one. Another stood up something like a red question mark on top of her head.

"I don't care if I did," said Jinny, in answer to the faces. "It's my own hair, ain't it? And if I wanted it bobbed like Martie's, ain't I got a right to do it? It's my own hair, I tell you."

"But why did you hide the braid in the pillow, dear?" said Aunt Rose, after the

shout of laughter had died down a little, leaving faint giggles and chuckles behind it.

"There wasn't no other place," said Jinny. Excitement, suspense, and sorrow had quite upset her English. She gazed angrily at the red pigtail still in Aunt Rose's hand. "I had to put it somewhere, didn't I? And then I had to get it out again, didn't I?" Quite suddenly all the wind went out of Jinny's high flying sails. "It's been a dreadful day," she wailed. "And my hair's worse than ever. I wisht —I wisht I could wear Topsy's wig, forever 'n' ever."

The little nurse reached out a pretty, white hand and smoothed down the lock that stood up so defiantly on top of Jinny's head. "Never mind, dear," she said. "I can fix it, beautifully. Really I think it's

going to be pretty, bobbed like Martha's. Come downstairs and I'll even it off for you."

Jinny went away with Miss Russell, the red pigtail dangling from one hand, the other held fast in Miss Russell's. The Bungayloafers gazed at each other.

"She didn't even once think that we might—" began Marjory.

"Of course not," said Lissy.

"But she didn't even once think that any one might think—" said Marjory again.

"I'm glad she didn't," said Joe.

"Oh, so am I," said Betty. "Isn't she dear—and isn't she funny?"

Marjory laughed softly.

"I'll never forget that red pigtail and that funny cropped head," she said.

"But where are those pearls?" said Nancy.

CHAPTER XIX

A BALL OF BLUE WOOL

UNDER Miss Russell's skillful hands, Jinny's shorn head bloomed out, triumphantly. A last look into her morning-glory wreathed mirror, next morning, did much to help her bear the jokes slung at her, from all sides, as she took her place between John and Barbie at the breakfast table.

"I don't care," she began, her pretty bobbed head held proudly. Then she stopped short. "Miss Russell says it'll be darker when it grows out," she said. "And that I've got to keep my temper down to match it. So I'm not going to get mad, no matter what you say."

"Good for you, Jinny," said Joe.

"And now I'm going to help find those pearls," went on Jinny. "I couldn't give my mind to it before. I was thinking so much about my hair, getting it bobbed, and then wondering what to do with that old pigtail."

"Every single *g* in its place," said Joe. "A bobbed head agrees with you, Miss Mason."

"Now that I've got a decent-looking head like the rest of you," said Jinny, "won't you please call me Virginia?"

"We call you Jinny because we like you," said Betty. "Just as we call Marjory, Margie."

"I'd never thought of that," said Jinny. "Jinny for me, then," she added.

But even with Jinny's help, and the help of the town members of the M. S., who

came that afternoon and joined in the search, no pearls could be found. Thursday went by. Friday came and brought the little Pennies, but no pearls, and no clue of their whereabouts.

Saturday, the day of the pageant, dawned fair and golden. Rosemary Bungalow looked its best. The grass was freshly cut. Sweet peas swung from their trellises, filling the air with their delicate perfume.

All the seats on the porch were taken. Not only was most of Sugar River there, but friends of Aunt Rose had motored out from the city. Friends of Betty's mother and Aunt Mary Craig, who were in town establishing a Red Cross Chapter, heard about the pageant and came to see it.

With its setting of woods, flower-filled gardens, sunlit lawn, and sparkling fountain, the pageant was a great success. It

was led by Roger as a Boy Scout and Polly, trying to live up to her Pocahontas costume. Next came Billy, so wild and western a cowboy, he might have just stepped down from a "movie" screen. Harry, who was "Tom Sawyer," tried to keep up with "Topsy," who capered gayly about, her funny, kinky wool adorned with bits of colored ribbons. Lissy was "Orphant Annie" and Paul was "Oliver Twist." Then in a group, their skirts billowing about them, came the four "Little Women." Back of them was Tom as "Simple Simon." "Alice" was adorable in her short-waisted blue gown. Barby, as the "White Rabbit" and John as the "Mad Hatter," delighted every one, themselves included. "Haven't I got dandy ears?" Barby asked the audience, waving them up and down in the most rabbit-like fashion.

Cinderella's coach was drawn by rats with long whiskers. They were so life-like they made Nancy shiver. But they were really Trixy and Pet. Susy was a charming "Little French Cousin." Back of her came Martin and Martha as "Jack Spratt" and his wife. "Reddy Fox" and "Johnny Chuck" were next in line. No one would have dreamed their real names were Bob and Bert Penny. Last of all, came the "Princess" and "Prince Charming," looking exactly as all princes and princesses should look, although Betty had flatly refused to wear the remaining string of pearls.

Out of the distant grove, across the bridge, dipping into the garden, up the steps and across the lawn, to their places surrounding the fountain, they came, singing some verses about "Our Friends from

Story Book Land." Then the Boy Scout introduced the characters. It was a hard ordeal for bashful Roger, but he went through it without flinching and received much applause for his soldierly bearing.

Meg, Joe, Beth, and Amy gave a little scene from "Little Women." The Cowboy and Pocahontas gave a wild dance punctuated by wilder whoops. Alice and the Mad Hatter had intended to have a dialogue, but the Mad Hatter forgot his lines. Alice saved the day by reciting part of "The Jabberwocky." Simple Simon and the White Rabbit gave a dance. Little Orphant Annie gave her well-known recitation. Oliver Twist took part of her supper and begged for more. Tom Sawyer passed his whitewash pail and brush up and down among the crowd. Jack Spratt and his wife showed an empty platter.

Marjory descended from her pumpkin chariot, danced with the Prince, ran away, and lost her slipper. Joe, charming as his name, found it and fitted it to her small foot. Meanwhile, Betty had fallen asleep. Joe, still charming, knelt to waken her. He kissed her with so resounding a smack that the audience laughed and declared it was no wonder the Princess awoke.

The Boy Scout and the Little French Cousin had some tableaux in which the Flags of France and the U. S. A. took active part. These quite brought down the house.

As a grand finale, Marjory turned herself into a rose and danced in and out of the mist of the fountain. Then she and Joe led in a pretty dance in which all of the actors and most of the little guests took part.

The out-of-town guests had applauded enthusiastically throughout. During refreshments, they consulted together and with Aunt Rose. Aunt Rose called Betty. When she came back to the other actors, she was flushed and bright-eyed.

"They want us to repeat it after dinner for the benefit of the new Red Cross Chapter," she cried. "Aunt Rose says we can. Isn't that splendid?"

The rest of that day and evening were so full that no one except Lissy, Marjory, and Joe, who never quite forgot them, gave a thought to the missing pearls. The porch was packed, and there were rows of chairs on the lawn. The proceeds made a neat, little sum for the struggling new chapter. And no one was happier over it all than the Bungayloafers, themselves.

Sunday was given up to taking the little

Pennies and the little Masons to their homes.

Monday morning, at breakfast, every one was a little quiet. For one thing, the pearls were still missing. Then, too, the wonderful bungalow party was almost over. Wednesday morning, Joe, Betty, the Marties, and Nancy were to leave. Joe, Betty, and the Marties were going to the Bernard Camp in the Adirondacks. Nancy was to enter a hospital and begin training for the nurse she had always said she wanted to be.

In a few days, too, Marjory's father was coming to take her and Roger and Lissy to The Willows. Susy would go to her own home. The Rosemary Twins and Jinny would divide their time between Rosemary Bungalow and the farm.

After the work was done, that morning,

every one went out-of-doors. Nancy and Miss Russell were talking excitedly about Nancy's new work. Aunt Rose was writing letters. Mary was knitting. The blue ball bounced about in her lap, getting smaller and smaller. Mary wondered if there were going to be enough wool. Betty played the victrola and Marjory tried a new dance that she had thought out that morning. Roger and Martin were in the garden. Martha, of course, was with them.

Joe was thinking about the lost pearls. How could the Bungayloafers go away from Rosemary Bungalow and leave that mystery unsolved?

"I say, Mary," he said to the pink Rosemary Twin near him, "let's go up in the secret room and have another try at those pearls."

"I'm Rose," dimpled the Rosemary

Twin, "but I'll go with you, Joe. Mary wants to knit."

Up in the secret room, they looked the table over—searching its drawer and its shelf just as they had done many times before. They even looked in the books. For the fourth time, they emptied the waste-basket. They got down and searched again under the seats and behind the ferns. Rose even poked at the earth in the jars.

"It's no use," she said, at last.

"They must have been swept up and burned up," said Joe. "I can't think of anything else."

They went slowly back to the porch. Martha, Martin, and Roger had come in from the garden. It was very sultry and they were all glad to drop down anywhere.

It was just at this time that Mary gave a sudden exclamation. Aunt Rose stopped

writing. Nancy and Miss Russell stopped talking. Every one gazed at Mary. She sat there, one hand firmly grasping Jinny's half-finished sweater, the other holding out a small wad of paper.

"Lissy—oh, Lissy Penny," she gasped, "are—these—your—pearls?"

"Don't touch it—any one but Lissy," she went on, as eager hands on all sides reached out for the little wad of paper. "Oh, Lissy, do look quick."

Lissy took the paper. Her face was as white as her dress as she opened it.

There, shining against their dingy covering, was a string of pearls. Those near enough could see the gold-brown stone in its clasp.

"Where on earth did they come from, Mary?" cried Joe.

Mary was white with anxiety.

"I had them all the time," she said. "They were inside my ball of blue wool."

"But how on earth did they get there, Mary?" cried her Twin.

"I'm—trying—to think," said Mary. "It was that awful morning I tried to be you, too, Rose. I was 'most everywhere. Where did I wind this ball?"

"The wool was still in the skeins when you showed it to me, dear," said Aunt Rose.

"I can't remember," said poor Mary, looking from one to another of the Bungay-loafers. "I never wind balls around anything, anyway. Some one must have wound it for me—who did?"

"I did," said Joe.

He left his chair and came to stand back of Mary.

"Don't you remember, Mary," he said,

"while some of the others went down to hunt for Rose, I stayed in the secret room with you just to tease you? I knew they couldn't find her. I was just about sure you were trying to be both of you. You'd just begun to wind a skein of wool and I said I'd wind it. I started in and I didn't do it well, and you said some people used something to wind it on. I just reached over on the table and took up a little wad of paper that lay there."

Joe was so shamefaced and solemn that every one had to laugh. Mary drew a long breath of relief.

"I'm so glad it was you, Joey," she said. "I was so afraid you'd find out that I did it—or something. I remember about it all now—only I was thinking so hard that morning about how to keep you all from finding out that Rose had gone, I didn't

notice what you said, or what you wound the ball on or anything."

"Well for a rising young detective-lawyer, or whatever it is you are, or are going to be," chuckled Lissy, "I don't think much of your part in 'The Great Pearl Mystery.' "

"I'm glad you did it, Joe, if any one had to," said Marjory, out of the laugh that went up at Joe's expense.

"I can stand it as well as any one," said Joe good-naturedly. "Gee, Mar, but I'm glad they're found, even if I did take them."

"From now on," said Marjory, solemnly, "we'll keep our pearls in Daddy's safe, Lissy."

" 'Deed we will," said Lissy. "It's an awful responsibility owning pearls," she added.

During luncheon, the pearls were handed around the table for every one to gaze at. Then they were given to Aunt Rose to put away with the other string. And while they were still talking about them, the telephone rang.

After Aunt Rose had talked for a few minutes, she called Marjory.

"It's your Daddy, dear," she said. "I didn't say a word about the pearls—you tell him."

Marjory took the receiver. If Aunt Rose had not been talking about the pearls, what had made her eyes so blue and her whole face so radiant?

When Marjory came back to the table, a few minutes later, her own face was beaming and she fairly bubbled over with something.

"Wasn't he glad, Mar?" cried Lissy.

"About the pearls?" asked Marjory. "Oh yes, I suppose so. He didn't say much about *them*."

"What is the excitement, then?" asked Joe.

"I can't tell any one," said Marjory, "unless it's Aunt Rose. I suppose she knows it. Why, of course you do, Aunt Rose. Isn't it splendid?"

"I'm so glad you think so, dear," said Aunt Rose. "I think it's rather splendid, myself."

Just here, there came a great honking and shouting at the side door. And there were three cars from Sugar River which had come to take the Bungayloafers for sort of a farewell picnic to Sugar River Falls.

In them were Polly and her mother, Laura and Emily, Billy and his grandfather and grandmother, Tom, Paul,

Harry, and Norah. Larry came up from the garage with Aunt Rose's car, and Joe ran to get his.

It was a wonderful picnic in the grove and gully near a pretty, slender line of falling water called Sugar River Falls. There was a wonderful supper at the foot of the falls. Best of all, almost, was the long ride home by roundabout country roads. One of these roads wound through a bit of a village called Locust Grove. Here, Joe said, he had found Betty when she was a little girl. They stopped to look at an old farmhouse where Joe had lived for a while. Then they stopped to look at the old Blake house where Betty had stayed a while with her Aunt Priscilla and Aunt Prudence. It was closed now. Aunt Priscilla was dead, and Aunt Prudence lived with Betty's father and mother in the city. The Mar-

"SHE SAT DOWN ON ONE OF THE TWIN BEDS AND PUT AN ARM AROUND ROSE AND AN ARM AROUND MARY."

ties, greatly excited and half homesick for just a minute, pointed out a road which led away from Locust Grove to their home, The Wren's Nest.

The Rosemary Twins were going to bed that night, when Aunt Rose knocked and came in, trailing silken blue draperies after her.

"Do you know what Marjory's secret is, Twinnies?" she said. She sat down on one of the twin beds and put an arm around Rose and an arm around Mary.

The Twins shook their heads. Aunt Rose's blue eyes had never been so blue. Her happy voice had never been so happy.

"What is it?" cried Rose.

"Is it that which makes you shine so, Aunt Rose?" said Mary.

"I'm so happy," said Aunt Rose's happy

voice. "I'm going to be married, Twinnies."

"Married?"

The word came from both Twins at once. They stared at Aunt Rose. Then they stared at each other.

"To—Marjory's—father?" said Mary.

Aunt Rose nodded. "Isn't it lovely?" she cried. "Aren't you glad?"

"We're — glad — you're — happy," said Mary, slowly.

They both hugged Aunt Rose and kissed her, and Aunt Rose hugged them and kissed them.

"Marjory wants to announce it to-morrow," she said. "So don't tell any of the Bungayloafers."

CHAPTER XX

HAPPY ENDINGS AND BEGINNINGS

"JOE," said Marjory, after breakfast the next morning, "will you please take some of us to the woods this morning?"

"Sorry, Miss Brook," said Joe, with much formality, "but I have a previous engagement."

"For what, Joe?"

"To convey the Misses Dawson to their home to confer with their parent," said Joe.

"How silly you are, Joey," laughed Marjory. "Never mind—I just wanted to find some ferns."

"Larry can take you, Margie," said Aunt

Rose. Aunt Rose was all smiles this morning. "Going alone, Rosemary Dawson?"

The Rosemary Twins nodded.

It was another lovely morning—the kind, August knows so well how to make when she is in the right mood. Soft warm mists rose, silver-gray, and lost themselves in sunshine that was not yet too warm. But the Rosemary Twins, both in the front seat of the car with Joe, were unusually silent.

"Why so still, fair Rosemary?" questioned Joe, making the car spin merrily along.

"We feel—still," said Rose.

"Something dreadful happened?" asked Joe. "Lost anything? If so, search my pockets—it's probably there."

"Something's going to—happen," said Rose.

"Can't it be helped?"

Two blonde heads shook emphatically.

"Well," said Joe, deftly turning a corner, and beginning to climb the long hill, "I'll tell you something good for little girls to know. Dreadful things that are going to happen often aren't dreadful at all when they do happen."

"This one can't help being," said Rose, dolefully.

While the Rosemary Twins went to find father, Joe rode on up the hills to turn around.

Father was on the porch reading his paper.

"Well, Twinnies," he cried, as they ran up the walk between the pansy beds, "but what is the matter?" he added, at sight of their sober faces.

The Twins sat down, one on each side of him.

"Some one's going to be married," Mary said, slowly and solemnly.

Never had Father looked younger or handsomer than he did this morning. He showed no surprise at Mary's statement.

"How did you find out?" he asked.

"Aunt Rose told us," said Rose.

"Rose?" cried Father, surprised now. "How could she?"

"She's going to tell every one this noon," said Mary, "or Margie is."

"Going to tell every one?" Father stared at his Twins, his eyes as wide and blue as theirs.

"An—announcement, Margie calls it," explained Rose. "Margie knows, of course," she added.

"Margie?" Father looked still more puzzled.

"Why it's her father's going to marry her," said Rose, with no regard whatever for English as it should be spoken.

"Let's begin over," said Father, "till I get this thing straight. Just who is it that's going to be married?"

"Aunt Rose," said Mary.

"Margie's father," said Rose.

"Rose and Dave Brook?" cried Father. "Well, that's almost the best thing I've heard of in some time."

Rose looked at Mary. Mary looked at Rose.

"Of course, we want Aunt Rose to be happy," said Mary.

"Aunt Rose is happy enough now," said Rose.

"Now see here," said Father. He put an arm around each of his small, sober daughters. "You want Aunt Rose to be happy?

But you don't want—just what is it you don't want, Twinnies?"

"She'll belong to Margie more than to us," said a small, half-ashamed voice. It might have belonged to either Twin.

"Aunt Rose has a heart like her bungalow," said Father, quietly. "Beautiful sunny rooms upstairs and downstairs. And even as it has been there, while Marjory had a room on one side of her own special self, you'll always have the other."

Rose looked at Mary. Mary looked at Rose.

"Did you know, Father, that we didn't want Margie to come—just at first?" said Mary, in a very low voice.

Father nodded. "But you grew to love her at once, didn't you?" he asked.

"Oh yes, Father," cried Rosemary Daw-

son. "We—we just thought we weren't going to like her," added Rose.

Rose looked at Mary. Mary looked at Rose. Father said nothing.

"And you think, Father, maybe, we'll really like—this?" asked Mary.

Father nodded. "You'll be so glad to see Aunt Rose so happy, you'll be happier than ever yourselves," he said.

Mary looked at Rose. Rose looked at Mary.

"Maybe—we—will," said a voice, that might have belonged to either.

"It's the best thing that could happen to Rose," Father went on talking to them quite as if they were grown-ups. "Rose hasn't always been happy. Now's the time you must think more about Aunt Rose and her happiness than you do about Rosemary Dawson and hers."

"Margie's father is awfully nice" said Mary, slowly, "for a man, that is."

"Yes," said Father. He seemed to be thinking about something besides Marjory's father. "I believe I'll tell you something," he said. "It's a great secret, too. No one knows it yet—except myself and one other person."

"What is it?" cried Rosemary Dawson.

"Whose ear first?" said Father.

"Both, please, Father. Please tell Rosemary Dawson."

Father drew them so close together that Mary's blonde hair mingled with Rose's blonde hair. And Mary's eyes, big and blue, gazed straight in Rose's, big and blue, too. Then he said something very low—just a few words.

"Father John Dawson!" cried Mary.

"Honest and true?" cried Rose.

"Honest and true," said Father. "How do you like it?"

Mary stared at Rose. Rose stared at Mary. The blue question marks turned suddenly into glad exclamation points.

"We just love it," cried Rosemary Dawson.

Joe's loud honking down in the road was at last noticed even by the three on the porch.

"Oh, Father," cried Rose. "Please can't we announce this, too?"

"Please, Father," begged Mary.

Father thought a minute. "Ask *her,*" he said.

Neither Twin would sit with Joe on the way home. And there was so much whispering, which broke out into so many delightful giggles, that Joe, at last, stopped

the car just above the village, to ask what was the matter.

"You'll know by and by," said Rose.

"I would suggest," said Joe, "that we re-christen Rosemary Bungalow. It should be named 'The House of Many Secrets.'"

"But there won't be any left after lunch," laughed Mary.

The luncheon table was beautifully trimmed with maiden-hair ferns and late pink roses. Aunt Rose was radiant. She was so excited that she sugared Lissy's cocoa twice and even put a generous spoonful of sugar into Roger's glass of milk. Marjory ate little and the Rosemary Twins almost nothing. Indeed so much excitement filled the air, that even Martha refused her third ear of green corn.

"Aunt Rose, please may I tell them before the dessert?" begged Marjory.

"We'll all eat twice as much afterward—and it's that delicious frozen pudding."

"Marjory has something to tell you," said Aunt Rose. She reached under the edge of the table, found Mary's hand and squeezed it. Then she reached under the edge of the table on the other side, found Rose's hand, and squeezed it.

Marjory stood up in her place. Every one looked at her. Her soft curls fluffed around her pretty neck, her dark eyes danced with delight.

"Rosemary Dawson and Miss Russell know," she said, her cheeks growing pink with excitement. Then, in her most important manner, she added, "It gives me great pleasure to announce that on the first of October, my Aunt Rose is going to marry my Daddy!" Then she sat down.

Every one looked at Aunt Rose—sweeter than any rose on the table.

Joe sprang to his feet.

"Love and best wishes from your Bungayloafers," he cried, tossing her the rose that had been at his plate. Then every one threw her a rose. They forgot all about the dessert and left their places to cluster about her and hug and kiss her. Marjory slipped an arm around each Rosemary Twin and whispered, "Isn't it going to be wonderful for us?" Rose looked at Mary. Mary looked at Rose. And all at once they knew it was going to be wonderful and they hugged Marjory and told her so.

It was some time before every one was back in his place at the table. Then, just as Aunt Rose was going to ring for the dessert, Rose telegraphed Mary across the table, "Ready?" and Mary telegraphed

back. "Ready!" And they both stood up.

"We've something to tell, too," said Rose.

"Some one else is going to be married," said Mary.

"Guess?" said Rosemary Dawson.

"Not Nancy?" cried the irrepressible Joe.

"You're the only marriageable young man I know, Joe," laughed Nancy.

"Not Betty?" cried Joe. For Betty at seventeen had plenty of admirers.

Two blonde heads shook violently.

"She's here at this table, though," said Rose.

"Janet Russell," cried Aunt Rose, looking at Miss Russell's red cheeks, "why didn't you tell me?"

"I haven't known it myself—long," said Miss Russell.

"But who is it?" cried Aunt Rose. "Do I know him?"

"We're trying to tell you," said Mary, patiently.

"Miss Janet Russell," announced Rosemary Dawson, "is going to marry Mr. John Dawson."

"John?" cried Aunt Rose, staring at Miss Russell. "My brother John? Well; if that isn't quite too good to be true."

The pudding was quite forgotten till Mrs. Wright's anxious voice from the door was heard above the clamor.

"The puddin's about meltin', Miss Norris," she said.

The pudding was served, and while it was being eaten, the chatter and laughter went on.

"You certainly have luck discovering

relatives, Mar," cried Joe. "Not contented with sister, brothers, grandmothers, great-aunts, uncles, aunts, and cousins, you now add a mother to your collection."

"That certainly was a fortunate wreck for Rosemary Dawson," said Nancy.

The Rosemary Twins, now one on each side of Miss Russell, looked at each other and nodded their heads emphatically.

"Didn't I say this should be called 'Once Upon a Time Bungalow'?" said Betty. "Isn't it all just like a fairy story?"

"This surely is a happy ending," said Lissy.

"I'd call it a happy beginning," said Marjory.

THE END

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